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## THE CHARLESTON CONVERSATIONALISTS

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In 1776 or thereabouts the young men of Charleston met with the young men of Virginia, Massachusetts, and other places north and ordered a new way of life for themselves. After seven years of a war that measured the greatness of their courage, followed by six years of debate, discussion, and conversation that marked the resolution of their enlightenment, these same men, somewhat older, wrote the seven articles and the declaration of rights which, for all times since, have formed the heart and soul of our society.

Having done all this, they returned to their homes. Those who came back to the South Carolina Low Country were, for the most part, men of wealth, educated, proud of themselves for achieving a liberty of their own demanding. Their acts have become history and we study them as such. Yet the sort of life which they then established for themselves we have forgotten — or, more truly, have never known. We find hints in letters and diaries and memoirs, but the oral vigor which was the vital ingredient is forever gone. Their way of life was too soon lost, laid low by many things, by the abolition of primogeniture, by the tariff, by the political ambitions of John C. Calhoun, and, most of all, by the emotional ferment of nullification.

What we do know is that from 1790 until about 1826 a strong and delightful society mingled in Charleston, South Carolina — planters, all of them, although some were called doctors and lawyers and teachers. The forests had been cleared, the embankments and channels which served the rice fields all completed. Overseers and slaves had become so trained that the planter need no longer super-

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vise personally the tending of his crops. The very clearing away of the pine forests, furthermore, had made more malignant "the fever of the country" which we now call malaria.<sup>1</sup> Everything tended to bring the planter to the city, away from the unhealthy plantation, during the hot months of the year. As a consequence, for a little over thirty years the town houses of the Low Country gentlemen offered a hospitality unique in the history of our society, the hospitality of intelligent, charming, energetic people with nothing to do save entertain one another and travelers who came their way.

Two generations of these men were roughly intersected by the War of 1812. Though their political viewpoints diverged, the first generation passed on to the second its own distinguishing characteristics: an education which was the best that Europe or this country had to offer, a pride that was arrogant, a self-imposed system of honor that led to charming courtesy and quick duels, and an ability to converse perhaps unequaled on the American cultural landscape.

Planters of both generations were educated, as a matter of course, so that they might rule the state and prevent any political changes inimical to the planter's interests. All planters necessarily were masters of the language; they wrote and spoke with fluency and ease. Their knowledge of the law was adequate to protect their interests before the courts or at the state legislature; their knowledge of the world's literatures was sufficient for the most cultured intercourse.

The arrogance in them was an outgrowth, largely, of the great holdings which they, as planters, controlled. Large properties had always been a source of pride in the Low Country. The planter "lived in baronial independence upon his large estates, surrounded by dependents, and with every means of luxurious enjoyment."<sup>2</sup> His country house was a huge mansion whose two-storied ballroom and many bedrooms could contain a multitude of convivial guests. His servants fed him delicacies raised on his own lands or brought by ships from many parts of the earth. From morning until night trained attendants catered to his comforts, anticipating his whims. To his wife and children he was able to give all the pleasures and

<sup>1</sup>Mrs. St. Julien Ravenel, *Charleston, the Place and the People* (New York, 1906), pp. 384-85.

<sup>2</sup>Charles Fraser, *Reminiscences of Charleston* (Charleston, 1854), p. 58.

benefits the world had to offer. He was the agent of swift retributive justice which he alone administered to the slaves and house servants about him. It was in keeping with all this that when the planter spoke socially or politically his voice rang with an accustomed assurance.

In Charleston, as on their plantations, the words of these gentlemen were equally unquestioned, socially, economically, politically. In 1820 that town had a population of 25,000, of which 14,000 were black. Of the 11,000 whites, save for the planters, their relatives, and dependents, there was only an artisan class composed entirely of newly arrived foreigners, mostly English and Scotch "who kept to themselves, had their own clubs, and, contented with the large fortunes which they accumulated, took no part in public affairs." They dabbled not at all in politics.<sup>3</sup>

The third characteristic of the planters was also a result of the same independence which gave to them their arrogance. Because they associated with one another as absolute equals and because there were no laws or rules not of their own making that bound them, they developed a complex but tacitly understood system of conduct which each applied sedulously to himself. A constant and carefully watched courtesy set off their intercourse, both among themselves and with strangers. The integrity of a planter's word was complete, especially since it was personally guarded and guaranteed.<sup>4</sup> Because of this personal watchfulness of their conduct, formality was the rule among planters, a formality expressed in the use of the last name only, even among close friends, and the wearing of hats in social situations in which it would be unusual to do so today.

Yet in all of their relationships, formal as they were, the outstanding feature was an ease of manner. The separateness, the individuality of the planter's life, enhanced this quality. He was

<sup>3</sup>Ravenel, *Charleston, the Place and the People*, p. 389.

<sup>4</sup>The fact that this is still true among the planters of John's Island was only recently demonstrated to the writer. Leaving a plantation house with an extremely valuable manuscript under his arm, he remarked to the Charleston friend who had introduced him, "I don't see how one could so easily part with this to a complete stranger." The friend casually answered, "Once a planter is assured you're a gentleman he'll trust your word completely from then on. He *knows* you'll return the manuscript, some time, when you choose to do so."

indifferent to the opinions of all those outside of his class. And he was the acknowledged peer of any other man within his own circle. He was, therefore, at ease with the world he ruled, "doing only what seemed good to himself, forming his own opinions, deciding his own problems."<sup>5</sup> His formality was of his own making, and, consequently, never restricted his ease of bearing.

When Low Country gentlemen talked together, their conversation was the natural expression of their individuality. And Charleston was the common ground for their talk. For six months of each year, while they occupied their town houses, the planters who had not gone abroad or to the watering places of the North met in their clubs and in their homes for various forms of entertainment. But that pleasure which claimed them oftenest was conversing with one another.

Lest there be some misunderstanding about the casual meetings of these men on and about the streets of Charleston, it might be well to explain that there were few informal chance conversations, at least during the two generations with which this statement is concerned. The planters were much too carefully formal for that. Moreover, the streets were too dirty for much walking about. The out-of-doors on a Charleston summer day was also uncomfortably hot. Of course, whenever there was a national, state, or local emergency the planter assumed a public role in discussion, since none took civic responsibilities more seriously than did these gentlemen. When the British or the Indians threatened, the planter met with other townsmen at the corner of Church and Broad Streets, which had been the center of the old walled city, and where for generations public discussions had been held. There, in a somewhat formal manner, was decided the best course of action to take.

There were few casual meetings in the market place; the planters simply did not associate with the artisans. During the spring evenings, when all of Charleston society met in promenade on the Battery, the scene was also formal, and the conversational opportunity was of less importance than the promenade itself.

The meetings in their own private clubs, however, had both the exclusiveness that the planters demanded and the conversational wit and variety upon which they avidly fed. Two such clubs will suffice

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<sup>5</sup>Ravenel, *Charleston, the Place and the People*, p. 389.



for illustration, one from each of the generations being discussed. The differences in these two clubs show as well as anything can the essential differences between the Federalists and their sons.

The Federalist club of the first generation, called the Cossack, met every Wednesday night. Its only purpose was the drinking of old wine to the accompaniment of good conversation. "It had no rules, for every member was a law to himself, and that law was never known to vary. No penalty, for there was none to enforce it. No duty imposed on any one but to contribute to the very extent of his intelligence, whatever might promote their happy and enlightened intercourse, and to pay two dollars for his dinner."<sup>6</sup>

The members who belonged and enlivened the meetings were those statesmen, diplomats, soldiers, and jurists who had served at the beginnings of the country. All of them brought their experiences to the common stock of conversation. All had been educated at English universities, and their ideas were usually framed in literary allusions. But, because they had fought in a war of long campaigns and had acquired the vernacular of experience, their words were punctuated with explosive epithets, and poetry sometimes gave way to racy anecdotes. Illustrative material from each of their lives was the pith and substance of the talk, but invariably the stories were presented with a charm that held the listeners until the late hours of the night.

These men brought their sons to the club and used the meetings as a sort of conscious indoctrination of the next generation into the culture which had become theirs. To the elders their club was the the embodiment of that form of convivial living which they wanted carried on after them. All were too well aware that the numbers of the Founders were rapidly diminishing. Lynch, Middleton, Edward Rutledge had gone. John Rutledge died just as the new century opened; his "persuasive and winning" conversation would no longer win friends to the Federalist cause.

General Thomas Pinckney and General Charles Cotesworth Pinckney still remained, and they set the tone of much of the discussion. Thomas, who had been called "the most accomplished Hellenist of his generation," was direct and energetic in his manner

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<sup>6</sup>Fraser, *Reminiscences of Charleston*, p. 50.

of speaking.<sup>7</sup> Hugh Swinton Legare, who, as a young boy, had attended the Cossack meetings, and who knew Pinckney well, described him as he must have been at that time:

We have still amongst us a venerable relic of that cultivated and heroic age, whom we may single out . . . to offer a tribute justly due to such a union in one accomplished character, of the patriot, the gentleman, and the scholar—of the loftiest virtue exercised in all the important offices and trying conflicts of life, with whatever is most amiable and winning in social habitudes, in polished manners and an elegant taste.<sup>8</sup>

Since the first generation of planters had been educated in England, the desire to emulate the great English orators was inculcated in them as a part of their training. A suggestive observation in respect to this was made by Dr. Archibald Rutledge, descendant of both John and Edward, and present owner of Hampton, the old Rutledge plantation:

In the day of the Founders, men like Thomas Lynch, Jr., Arthur Middleton, and my own forebears, Edward and John Rutledge, *listened* to Pitt, to Fox, to Burke. There's a letter from John to Edward (who was younger) advising him to be *sure* to attend Parliament "to hear Edmund Burke."<sup>9</sup>

The elder generation produced speakers who tended to tell a tale or an anecdote to illustrate a point rather than merely to make that point abstractly amidst a general chain of discussion.

The sons of the Federalists, however, established clubs of a different order. They formed the first college literary societies at the state universities, societies experimenting principally in various types of debating. And the Charleston clubs formed by these same sons as they returned from college differed still more.

Such a one was the Literary Club, started in the twenties, which met every other week at the home of one of its members. The host of the evening was expected either to present a paper of his own or to provide an invited guest who would do so:

The subject was always announced at the previous meeting, that the members might not be unacquainted with the matter. The reading ended, the other gentlemen present took it up, asked questions or discussed the

<sup>7</sup>Rev. Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, *Life of General Thomas Pinckney* (Boston and New York, 1895), p. 23.

<sup>8</sup>[Hugh Swinton Legare], "Classical Learning," *Southern Review*, I (1828), 3n.

<sup>9</sup>Dr. Archibald Rutledge to the writer, Hampton, May 16, 1954.

subject. The topic was dropped when dinner was announced, punctually at eleven o'clock, and general conversation wound up the evening.<sup>10</sup>

Strangers were often brought to these club meetings, usually to present a paper, but sometimes to take part in the discussion as experts in a given field. Many of the papers became printed essays which have survived. Charles Fraser wrote his *Reminiscences*, quoted in this article, primarily in order to read them before the club. Legare read an essay on Greece, which later was expanded into an article on "The Public Economy of Athens," and published in the *Southern Review*.<sup>11</sup> Joel R. Poinsett read a paper on the South American countries. Commodore Maury read one on the hydrography of the seas, and Louis Agassiz presented a work on the coal measures.<sup>12</sup>

In the distinction between the telling of anecdotes and the reading of essays the divergence between the two generations becomes clearer. Whereas the first was proud of its own accomplishment and sought to inculcate in its sons the qualities necessary to preserve its heritage, the second generation, fully aware of and proud in its turn of what the fathers had done, was more interested in excellence for its own sake. Although each member of the Literary Club was well educated, all met, nevertheless, in these bi-monthly seminars to participate in a sort of adult educational culture at the highest level.

It was at one of these Wednesday night meetings of the Literary Club, as it assembled in the home of Robert Y. Hayne in 1827, that the planters decided to pool the papers read at the club into a common literary venture. As a result, under the leadership of Legare and Stephen Elliott, Jr., as editors, the *Southern Review* was started. The learned essays that filled the pages of that most intellectual literary magazine well illustrate the type of papers which had been read at so many Wednesday night meetings of the Literary Club.

Of all places, however, where conversation was the chief entertainment for the Low Country planter, it was at the private tables of the Charleston homes where the sallies were the sharpest, and certainly the most delectable. For, as Charles Fraser said, and he was one of them: "The table was and always has been a great center of attraction, and remarkable for the display of that courtesy

<sup>10</sup>Ravenel, *Charleston, the Place and the People*, p. 474.

<sup>11</sup>VIII (1832), 261-326.

<sup>12</sup>Ravenel, *Charleston, the Place and the People*, pp. 474-75.

and mutual respect, without which it could never be a bond of enlightened intercourse. . . ."<sup>13</sup> The table during these two generations had what Fraser called "conversational intelligence." And he named such men as "Henry Deas, Major Wragg, Stephen Elliott, John Gadsden, Thomas Grimke, William Washington, and Hugh S. Legare" as contributing to that intelligence. There were others. Mitchell King, one of them, added a few names to the list:

Our immediate friends — our own peculiar set . . . [James R.] Pringle . . . impetuous . . . hating as cordially and loving as devotedly as ever — [James Louis] Petigru, the same noble, generous, witty, able, and delightful being . . . [Joel R.] Poinsett has become more domesticated among us. . . . [William] Drayton — the excellent — the pure — the disinterested. . . .<sup>14</sup>

The allusion to Poinsett's domestication probably referred to the fact that his breakfasts had become a marked feature of Charleston planter society. These breakfasts were weekly affairs. Poinsett collected at his table the brightest wits and the greatest beauties of the town. "Beauty or charm or intelligence in a woman, agreeability in a man, were the things he sought in his guests; if not possessed, a second invitation was never received. Strangers traveling from Europe or from the North (such as James Monroe) were always invited and treated with the utmost consideration and attention."<sup>15</sup>

That these breakfasts were primarily conversational in nature is further attested to by Mrs. Ravenel, who said of Poinsett:

His voice was husky always, but cultivation and refinement made it attractive, and he was the most delightful of hosts and best of *raconteurs*. A conversation led by him never flagged; he could always induce each guest to speak of that of which he spoke best, never allowed any one to prose, and when he took the parole himself, avoided with wonderful tact the part of the hero of his own stories. These breakfasts went on for years and were, in all pleasantness, lessons in the art of conversation.<sup>16</sup>

Other houses where fine conversational tables were enjoyed were those of James R. Pringle, Robert Y. Hayne, Judge Benjamin Huger, Dr. John Holbrook, and James Louis Petigru. Each was

<sup>13</sup>Fraser, *Reminiscences of Charleston*, p. 55.

<sup>14</sup>Mitchell King to Hugh Swinton Legare, Charleston, May 5, 1833. W. Garnett Chisolm Papers.

<sup>15</sup>Ravenel, *Charleston, the Place and the People*, p. 431.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 431-32.

famous for its individual charm; each was flavored by the wit of the guests found oftenest there.

Petigru often "laid hold" of friends and brought them home for dinner at three o'clock in the afternoon. Most frequently came Legare, his closest friend; William Harper; William D. Martin, a fellow lawyer; James R. Pringle; and Alfred Huger, who was to outlive many of them as "the last of the barons."<sup>17</sup>

At his special evening dinner parties Petigru entertained strangers from all over the world, with talk that lasted until midnight. Among others, came General Winfield Scott, Edward Trelawny (he who had danced with Byron about the funeral pyre of the poet Shelley), and Edward Everett. Petigru's cook was an artist, but all who came remembered the wit and humor of their host, rather than the excellence of the food.

The dinner conversations were fired with wit, whether they took place at Petigru's, or Judge Huger's, or Judge King's, or Pringle's. Petigru was "the fortune of a dinner party with a voice and an expression that gave zest to every *bon mot*"; complementing him was Legare, "overflowing with classical allusion, pungent criticism, and sparkling illustration," the finest scholar of them all, not only in Charleston, but perhaps in any town of the land. Alfred Huger, with a "leonine head, deep eyes, and shaggy brows," who, though he never entered public life as did the rest, nevertheless contributed a sound Unionist doctrine. For a time William Harper sat among them "with his rare combination of subtle analysis and brilliant imagination."<sup>18</sup>

At these gatherings, usually lasting from sunset until midnight, every question, political, scientific, or literary, which engrossed the thinking minds of the day became, at one time or another, the subject of conversation. As the friends talked they "drank like Carolinians" from decanters of "old Madeira which they swallowed glass after glass."<sup>19</sup> Voices mellowed as the evening wore on, but wit never retired before the conversation ended.

The very tables at which the planters ate and drank and talked became sounding boards for many of the ideas that were later voiced

<sup>17</sup>James Petigru Carson, *Life, Letters, and Speeches of James Louis Petigru, the Union Man of South Carolina* (Washington, 1920), p. 77.

<sup>18</sup>William J. Grayson, *James Louis Petigru* (New York, 1866), p. 102.

<sup>19</sup>Hugh Swinton Legare, "Diary of Brussels," *Works*, I, 88-89.

in legislative halls by these same men. The Unionist beliefs of Legare and Petigru, the passionate nullification oratory of Robert Turnbull and James Hamilton — even Robert Y. Hayne's reply to Webster — all were first argued across Charleston tables by Charleston planters who respected the individuality of one another and recognized the right of man to differ with man.

Finally the mad-dog fanaticism of nullification halted the Charleston conversations. Those Nullifiers who, in 1832, stalked the streets with guns to enforce their way of thinking upon the South Carolina minority ended the way of life of the Charleston conversationalists. Some were driven north, as was Drayton; many went west, as did James Hamilton; some like Thomas Grimke, died young. Only Petigru and Alfred Huger remained. Charles Fraser summed up the general situation after the battle of nullification was ended:

Alas, poor Carolina — there was a time when the intelligence and refinement of her social character were proverbial and those whose cultivation made it so — were the very men who had watched over her fortunes — guided her with their counsels — and defended her in the field — but also, where are they? and under what auspices can she be when such men as Drayton, Huger, etc., are denounced, abused, even threatened? I can scarcely believe that I am surrounded by realities — that all of this is not a mockery & dream when I hear men who identify themselves with Carolina — and all that was honorable & distinguished in her name and character — . . . called tories and denounced as public enemies — banished from her offices — and thought unworthy of her confidence & her honors —: well might we say "*republica est afflicta*."<sup>20</sup>

And Legare, in Europe, sad at watching the destruction of the group of brilliant people who had been his friends, wrote: "All these places left vacant in our society will remain so forever, for the day of our Southern prosperity — I mean in a moral & political point of view — is gone by."<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup>Charles Fraser to Hugh Swinton Legare, Charleston, January 30, 1833. Yates Snowden Papers. South Caroliniana Library.

<sup>21</sup>Hugh Swinton Legare to Mary Swinton Legare, Brussels, December 23, 1835. W. Garnett Chisolm Papers.

## THE RHETORICAL DEATH RATTLE OF THE CONFEDERACY

RALPH RICHARDSON

### I. INTRODUCTION

The war morale of the Confederacy varied extensively between 1861 and 1865. One of the more spectacular upsurges derived from speech-stirred mass meetings a few weeks before Appomattox and produced the last galvanic spurt of the will to fight. These meetings, beginning in Richmond early in February, 1865, spread erratically to the unoccupied regions and to several units of the Army of Virginia. At first it appeared that Confederate war speakers might have found rhetorical stimulants virile enough to lift a despairing people. But the surge of morale collapsed almost as suddenly as it had been born. In retrospect, the boastings of the speakers seem striking both in their desperation and in their delusion. The end was near, and the speeches at these gatherings may well be regarded as the rhetorical death rattle of the Confederacy.

### II. THE OCCASION

The fortunes of the South had indeed fallen low in the winter of 1864-65. Sherman, reaching the coastline of Georgia, had turned inland to menace Columbia, South Carolina. At Petersburg, Lee's outnumbered army, weakened by desertion and short on rations, was entrenched before the threat of Grant. In Richmond, the low state of public confidence was reflected by the climbing price of gold. Within a few weeks the exchange ratio had nearly tripled, going from thirty up to eighty dollars in paper for one of gold.<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile, an epidemic of peace resolutions had beset the Confederate Congress. Many members, unable to make forthright use of the words "surrender" or "submission," introduced measures looking toward a "settlement of the difficulties," or "an improvement in the

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<sup>1</sup>J. B. Jones, *Rebel War Clerk's Diary* (Philadelphia, 1866), II, 319, 394.

safety and fortunes of the people."<sup>2</sup> In all, the resolutions were symptomatic of a widespread distrust and disfavor surrounding President Jefferson Davis and his administration. Not long before, Davis had replaced General Joseph E. Johnston with the ill-fated Hood in an effort to halt Sherman's advance. Popular outcry against the removal was augmented by bitter criticism from Senator Wigfall in Congress and editorial attack in the Richmond press, particularly from the *Examiner*... Even within Davis's executive family there were men such as John Campbell of the War Department and Vice-President Stephens who illy concealed peace longings, if not a lack of confidence in the President's ability and integrity. Last of all, the argument over whether to free and arm slaves and send them to Lee led many to believe the time for peace at any price was at hand.

In the midst of these currents an opportunity came to President Davis to send three commissioners through the Union lines to meet with Lincoln or his representatives at Hampton Roads. For a time Confederate hopes were high, if not for independence, at least for armistice.<sup>3</sup> The commissioners, however, returned on Sunday, February 5, carrying news that Lincoln's terms were, in effect, unconditional surrender. There would be no armistice. The South must lay down its arms. Moreover, the slaves would undoubtedly be freed as a consequence of the Constitutional amendment recently endorsed by the Federal Congress. An indemnity might be paid; otherwise, the South must trust to Lincoln and to Northern liberality for the determination of its fate under reconstruction.

On Monday, the 6th, the Richmond papers carried the announcement of a public meeting "in answer to Lincoln" to be held that night in the African Church at seven-thirty. Long before the appointed hour an audience estimated as high as ten thousand sought entrance to the church.<sup>4</sup> Here, as well as in other halls and on Capitol Square, there occurred between February 6 and 9 the last outburst of the Confederacy's rhetorical defiance.

<sup>2</sup>Richmond *Examiner*, February 1-4, 1865.

<sup>3</sup>Jones, II, 407.

<sup>4</sup>This building, originally designed as a place for Negro worship, contained Richmond's largest auditorium, and was frequently used by white groups for political meetings.



### III. THE SPEAKERS AND SPEECHES

A number of dignitaries spoke, but the principal exhortations of the four-day demonstration were delivered by President Davis, Secretary of State Judah P. Benjamin, and Senator William Oldham of Texas. Each of the three had a special role to play in the mass persuasion effort. Davis's presence gave an official air to the Confederate response. Moreover, he brought strong ethical credits to the situation. For despite the criticism leveled at him and his administration, he was regarded by all as a man of great courage. His weakened health and intense physical suffering, well known throughout Richmond, doubtlessly augmented the impression when he, who had most to lose by further irritating the North, chose to make a firm rejection of the Hampton Roads terms.

Senator Oldham enjoyed a widespread reputation as a fiery orator. His duty was to draw upon pathetic appeals and charge the campaign with all the war passion he could generate. Secretary Benjamin, though under attack in the Senate and the press, was widely known for his public affability, as well as for his skill in logic, and his clear knowledge of the Confederacy's condition. To him went the task of arguing that the slaves must be freed, armed, and sent to fight for Lee.

The surviving Richmond dailies, beset with labor and paper shortages, presented only summaries and a few direct quotations.<sup>5</sup> From these, however, it is possible to piece together the official Confederate war argument:

1. Lincoln has made an insulting demand for surrender.
2. If the South surrenders the people will be subjected to inhuman conditions and tortures.
3. Southern independence requires any measure, however stringent, including freeing and arming the slaves.
4. The South is invincible.

Davis began with a defense of his reasons for sending commissioners to treat with Lincoln. Peace for the South through victory had always been his single objective. The Hampton Roads Conference did not promise much, but it was a possibility he could not in conscience decline to investigate. Peaceful overtures, however,

<sup>5</sup>The more complete accounts are in the *Daily Examiner* and the *Daily Dispatch*, February 7 and 10.

had been met with insult. If, now, a feeling of courage "should take possession of the hearts of the people, if they should give a hearty and unanimous answer to the demands of the present exigency upon them, then he could say we stood now upon the verge of success, which would teach the insolent enemy who had treated our propositions with contumely, that in that conference in which he had so plumed himself with arrogance, he was, indeed, talking to his masters." He concluded with: "Let us improve the errors of by-gones; let us unite our hands and hearts, lock our shields together, and we may well believe that before the next summer solstice falls upon us, it will be the enemy who will be asking us for conferences and occasions in which to make known our demands."<sup>6</sup>

Senator Oldham's words, while not reported in detail, were probably close to those he had used a week earlier in the Senate: "Can the affectionate mother ever become deaf to the plaintive moans of her once pure and intellectual, but now violated maniac daughter? . . . These barbarous and inhuman acts have passed into history. . . . The road to peace I covet is enfiladed by hostile armies, hedged by glittering bayonets, and slippery with blood; but it leads to the temple where liberty sits enthroned."<sup>7</sup>

Benjamin, saying "we must fight or die," urged Virginians to pressure their state assembly into freeing and arming the slaves, not only to meet the current emergency but also to set a legislative example for the Confederate Congress. "War was a game," he is reported to have said, "that could not be played without men, and men we must have. . . . When our soldiers in the trenches are sending up earnest appeals for help, will you withhold that aid, whether that aid be white or black?" This aid, Benjamin asserted, numbered 600,000 men of fighting age. Begin to free and arm the slaves and "in twenty days General Lee can be reinforced by twenty thousand men."<sup>8</sup>

In addition, all three speakers defied Lincoln, pictured the horrors of reconstruction, and asserted victory to be possible if the people but willed it.

<sup>6</sup>Richmond *Examiner*, February 7.

<sup>7</sup>William S. Oldham, *Speech or the Resolutions of the State of Texas, Concerning Peace, Reconstruction, and Independence*. Delivered in the Confederate Senate, January 30, 1865 (Richmond, 1865), pp. 12-13.

<sup>8</sup>Richmond *Examiner*, February 10.

#### IV. THE RESULTS

The amount and kind of audience reaction throughout the days of demonstration reveals a striking emotional incandescence. Benjamin had all of his many rhetorical questions answered in full audience chorus. Davis several times seemed to be ending his appeal, only to receive shouts of "Go on!" Many biographies of Davis as well as the memoirs and reminiscences of his auditors characterize this as the greatest speech of his life.<sup>9</sup> Once when a section of the meeting recessed for three hours hardly an individual left the African Church lest his seat to be taken by someone in the crowd without. A reporter for the *Richmond Dispatch* "was involuntarily carried back, by the sight and the eager spirit that animated all present, to the first days of secession. Never before has the war spirit burned so fiercely and steadily. The firm resolve to resist to the very death the demands of the Northern tyrant [was] plainly visible."<sup>10</sup> The *Examiner* spoke of the "haughty and unanimous defiance" with which the city of Richmond met the "fully revealed ferocity of the Yankees."<sup>11</sup> Another reporter noted that "men who had begun to talk in no undertone of reconstruction now frankly acknowledge their folly."<sup>12</sup>

With little delay the Administration made an effort to diffuse this apparent rebirth of morale throughout the land. Official delegations, made up mainly of ministers, traveled through Virginia and Georgia, addressing civilian and soldier groups.<sup>13</sup> The Virginia Senate and House debated sending five of their members to Lee's army "to address said Virginia troops, either orally or otherwise . . . to encourage them in their trying but sacred duty of defending both the honor and the very life of our revered commonwealth."<sup>14</sup> In

<sup>9</sup>See Alexander H. Stephens, *A Constitutional View of the Late War Between the States* (Philadelphia, 1870), II, 623-24; John W. Jones, *The Davis Memorial Volume, or Our Dead President, Jefferson Davis* (Richmond, 1890), p. 455; H. J. Eckenrode, *Jefferson Davis, President of the South* (New York, 1923), p. 324; Frank H. Alfriend, *The Life of Jefferson Davis* (Cincinnati, 1868), p. 611.

<sup>10</sup>*Richmond Dispatch*, February 7.

<sup>11</sup>*Richmond Examiner*, February 11.

<sup>12</sup>*Richmond Dispatch*, February 16.

<sup>13</sup>*Jefferson Davis, Constitutionalist, His Letters, Papers, and Speeches*, ed. Dunbar Rowland (Jackson, Mississippi, 1923), VI, 489-90.

<sup>14</sup>*Journal of the Senate of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Extra Session* (December 7, 1864 to April 2, 1865), p. 133.

turn, many military units held defiance meetings, passed resolutions, and sent them to the Richmond papers, e.g., "The officers and men of the Second Virginia Cavalry . . . have seen with deep indignation the ignoble terms offered by the President of the United States. . . ." The men of the Thomas Brigade termed Lincoln's behavior "perfidious, unfeeling, arrogant, and insulting," adding, "We spurn with contempt the proposition [he advances]."<sup>15</sup>

Those people not inspired by the mass meetings generally held their tongues and pursued a course of sullen inactivity. Some did speak out, however. In the Senate, on February 10, Louis Wigfall of Texas said: "The people had within the last few days heard a great deal of pernicious talk. Successes had been predicted. . . . This was not only silly, but criminal. At the very time it was being uttered the news was flashing over the wire of the fall of Blackville [Branchville?] and the cutting of the South Carolina Railroad. When delusive hopes were held out to the people, and misfortunes came quickly upon their heels, there would be a collapse of public feeling."<sup>16</sup> Wigfall, in attack upon Benjamin's suggestion that the slaves be armed, engineered a no-confidence resolution against the Secretary of State. As a tie, eleven to eleven, it failed.<sup>17</sup> The Virginia Senate, having resolved to adjourn at a given time to take in one of the mass meetings, became involved in bitter wrangling. Those interested in the meeting left. Those remaining behind stayed in session, ordered a roll call, sent the sergeant at arms in pursuit, and levied fines—all of which were later rescinded.<sup>18</sup> Alexander Stephens, attending one meeting and being scheduled to speak at the next, quietly slipped out of Richmond and went home to Georgia. Six months later, in prison in Boston, he recorded in his diary: "June 21. The solstice is upon us. . . . This is the day predicted by Mr. Davis . . . as that by which the authorities at Washington would be suing . . . for peace. Instead, alas! . . . When he made

<sup>15</sup>Most of the detailed resolutions are in the Thomas Munford Papers of the Brock MSS. in Huntington Library. Condensed reports appear in several Richmond papers, especially the *Examiner*, for February 10 and 18.

<sup>16</sup>*Richmond Examiner*, February 11.

<sup>17</sup>Rembert W. Patrick, *Jefferson Davis and His Cabinet* (Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1944), p. 200.

<sup>18</sup>*Virginia Senate Journal*, pp. 125-28.

that speech in Richmond, brilliant though it was, I looked upon it as not much short of dementation."<sup>19</sup>

The price of gold, temporarily stabilized, soon resumed its climb. In the field no military victory occurred to give reality to the alleged rebirth of spirit. Instead, defeats and public discontent mounted. Sherman sacked Columbia, South Carolina. More soldiers deserted Lee's army. On April 2, Richmond was entered by Union forces. Soon Appomattox came. And on May 10, President Davis was captured while in flight in Georgia.

#### V. AN EVALUATION

The problem of why the Confederacy fell is a complicated one. Of interest to us here is the simpler question of whether the war speakers could, perhaps, have found better arguments and used them in more effective ways.

Upon the whole, a negative answer seems indicated. By this time it was apparent that Johnston would be restored to command, with Davis's private acquiescence, through the machinery of legislation which made Lee commander-in-chief, but which, in effect, did not change the working relationship between Davis and Lee. The military situation was desperate and there was little Davis could say to create confidence in his own leadership. Even if he and his staff had some winning strategy in mind the plan of it could not wisely have been made public. Therefore, the speakers treated victory in the only possible manner—that is, in glowing but unsupported generalizations. The arming of slaves, Benjamin's assignment in persuasion, was well handled. Admittedly it was a measure of desperation, and Benjamin spoke of it as the South's last chance. To this he coupled an appeal to Virginia's pride, asking her to lead the way in her state assembly, which she did.

A second question arises: Why, after a concentrated propaganda drive which met with such seeming success, did the Confederacy fall within a few weeks?

In answer, it is wisest, in the first place, to be skeptical of whether any widespread revival of warlike spirit actually occurred. Government officials, and to a large extent the newspapers also, had

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<sup>19</sup>Alexander H. Stephens, *Recollections* (New York, 1910), p. 241.

the public duty of going through the motions of enthusiasm. Yet the discrepancy between these public manifestations of zeal and personal feelings of hopelessness is marked. Surveys of letters and other personal documents show no significant upsurge of morale.<sup>20</sup>

In the second place, it is understandable how a disheartened people, believing themselves insulted, might, under the emotion of the moment, give loud responses to the stimulation of powerful pathetic appeals from the leaders of government, and yet feel no lasting determination. At the same time, it should be remembered that until the Hampton Roads Conference there was an almost pitiful unreality in the thinking of many Southerners. Stephens, as we know, seemed to feel all would be well if only the people would follow him and his mystical devotion to the Constitution. There were others who still believed that closer cooperation among the individual states would make all problems disappear. When these thought currents came hard up against the meaning of the Hampton Roads Conference, the reality of a lost war for the first time came home to many people. Their responses then were fear and quick anger, neither of which, having developed so late, could be expected to sustain a genuine war effort.

In such a situation, the lash of *pathos* and even the weight of *ethos*, could not long keep truth obscured. The South was defeated and ready to quit. Edward A. Pollard, an editor on the staff of the Richmond *Examiner*, observed: "There was no depth in the popular feeling thus excited; it was a spasmodic revival, or short fever of the public mind."<sup>21</sup> It was, indeed, the rhetorical death rattle of the Confederacy.

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<sup>20</sup>An analysis of the several February, 1865, items in the Confederate manuscripts in the Huntington Library reveals only negative evidence. The feeling of the time is clearly suggested, but there is no specific indication of personal or individual reactions to the mass meetings.

<sup>21</sup>Edward A. Pollard, *Secret History of the Southern Confederacy* (Philadelphia, 1869), p. 473.

## RUSSELL H. CONWELL: AMERICAN ORATOR

MARY LOUISE GEHRING

### I.

Thirty years ago death stilled the tongue of Russell H. Conwell, first citizen of Philadelphia and popular orator of the American chautauqua and lyceum platforms. A third of a century later he lives on in the university he founded, the hospitals he established, the church he pastored, and, most of all, in the lives of those who came under his influence.

There is still such an interest in Conwell that in 1951 Harpers reissued his biography, which they originally published in 1915. The New York *Times* devoted its "Topics of the Times" column to him on August 25, 1946. Temple University proudly proclaims that it was built on "Acres of Diamonds," the title of Conwell's most famous lecture.

In a search for Conwellana manuscript material in 1951, I made routine inquiries of several historical societies. The curators of two of these societies, although they had no materials, wrote letters about their personal contacts with Conwell. One of them, Horace M. Mann of the Bucks County Historical Society, was a Temple graduate and might logically be expected to reminisce about Conwell. The other, James L. Bruce of the Bostonian Society, knew him only through his lectures. Yet his memories of Conwell were vivid.

Over fifty years ago I heard his famous lecture, "Acres of Diamonds," given as entertainment at the Indiana County (Pa.) Teachers Institute. It has remained with me as a happy memory. Several years later (I do not remember how many) I heard him give the same lecture here in Boston. I took my wife on this occasion and she enjoyed it as I did. In fact, I got the same thrill the second time that I had the first time.<sup>1</sup>

For many years Conwell was a prolific author as well as preacher and lecturer. He wrote Republican campaign biographies for Hayes,

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<sup>1</sup>James L. Bruce to the writer, April 23, 1951.

Garfield, and Blaine, and collaborated with John S. C. Abbott on *Lives of the Presidents of the United States of America*, published in 1893. He sketched the careers of Bayard Taylor, Joshua Giana-vello, John Wanamaker, and Charles Haddon Spurgeon. He published *Why and How*, a volume on Chinese immigration to America; *Woman and the Law*, a comparison of the legal rights of women with those of men; *Why Lincoln Laughed*, an evaluation of Lincoln's sense of humor; and histories of the great fires in Boston, 1872, and in St. John, 1877. His other full-length books include sermon collections and inspirational works. In addition, he also wrote numerous articles for magazines and newspapers.

Conwell's career as a lecturer began in the 1860's and extended to his death in 1925. During all these years he found time to lecture, by his own count, an average of 210 times a year, besides delivering one to three sermons every week. Throughout his career Conwell's professional repertory included many different titles. In 1870 Redpath and Fall listed "The Chinaman at Home" as one of his subjects. Other titles ranged from "Men of the Mountains" and "My Fallen Comrades," to "Five Million Dollars for the Face of the Moon" and "Anita, the Feminine Torch." His better known lectures were "The Jolly Earthquake," "The Silver Crown," "Artemus Ward," "The Angel's Lily," "Personal Glimpses," and, of course, "Acres of Diamonds," which he delivered more than six thousand times.

Although Conwell made several lecture tours abroad, his engagements were primarily in the United States. He spoke most frequently in the Philadelphia area and in New England, but he also made many tours through the Middle West, the South, and the Far West. In the eightieth year of his life, he scheduled a two weeks' tour of the West which included engagements in Bakersfield, California, Roseburg and Portland, Oregon, Waterville, Colfax and Walla Walla, Washington, Buhl and Nampa, Idaho, and Logan and Brigham, Utah. Dr. Stauffer, former dean of Temple University, reports that in the West excursion trains were sometimes necessary to carry people to Conwell's lectures.

A typical Southern tour was the one made in January, 1903. On Tuesday, January 6, he delivered "The Jolly Earthquake" in Augusta, Georgia. On the 7th, he gave "Acres of Diamonds" in Georgetown, South Carolina. The next day he was in Greenville, South



Carolina (the title of the lecture is not specified), and then in Asheville, North Carolina. The 12th, 13th, and 14th found him in Georgia — Atlanta, Savannah, and Tenille. In February of the same year Conwell spoke on successive days in Bowling Green, Kentucky, Glasgow, Kentucky, Nashville, Tennessee, and Blue Mountain, Mississippi. Four days later he was in Natchitoches, Louisiana.

In all sections of the country Conwell's lectures were well received. When he delivered "The Silver Crown" before the Maine Teachers Association in October, 1908, the Portland *Daily Eastern Argus* reported:

The address of the evening was by Rev. Dr. Russell H. Conwell of Philadelphia, who is known by name at least to everyone in the country. . . . [His lecture] was put in a way all his own and that will linger in the memories of those who were privileged to hear him.<sup>2</sup>

The *Daily Illinois State Register* of Springfield declared that "The Jolly Earthquake" was "replete with scintillating wit and deep pathos and was highly enjoyed." When Conwell gave "Acres of Diamonds" in San Francisco, the *Call* of that city said:

His address was brim full of humor, with an occasional touch of the pathetic. The audience showed its appreciation even of the frequent scathing criticisms of California and Californians with enthusiastic applause.<sup>3</sup>

When he spoke in Portland, the *Morning Oregonian* described his lecture in the following language:

His address was listened to with rapt attention, and applause was frequent and unstinted. Seldom has a lecture been heard in Portland so charged with wisdom and so vital with telling points. It was in itself a liberal education in the matter of grouping the advantages which men possess in this country, and showing how those advantages could be grasped by every man.<sup>4</sup>

Once in Rochester, New York, a storm delayed Conwell's train. He arrived at the auditorium almost two hours late to find a "large audience" waiting. Conwell decided to give his lecture in its entirety in spite of the hour. He asked his listeners to feel free to leave before or during the lecture. In the words of the city's *Democrat and Chronicle*, "It is only just to say that very few indeed

<sup>2</sup>Portland *Daily Eastern Argus*, October 30, 1908.

<sup>3</sup>San Francisco *Call*, February 6, 1904.

<sup>4</sup>Portland *Morning Oregonian*, January 28, 1909.

took advantage of his permission, and those . . . reluctantly." The paper continued:

It is impossible in a short newspaper article to give any idea of the charm and magnetism of the speaker. He was so thoroughly human, and struck so many sympathetic chords of humanity, and at the same time he is so earnest, honest and sincere that he won every heart. He is a brilliant speaker, and his lecture bristled with wit and humor, and it consisted mainly of illustrations which he declared are the best way to enforce the truth.<sup>5</sup>

In Nashville, where his audience included students from Peabody, Ward's Seminary, Belmont, and Boscobel College as part of the fifteen hundred to two thousand present, the *American* declared:

It is doubtful if any lecture of the season has been more thoroughly enjoyed.

"The Jolly Earthquake" is a clever lecture, scintillating with wit and humor, but with a broad underlying current of wisdom.

A few of the jokes . . . were of the vintage of '57, or thereabouts, but the percentage was probably smaller than is usual.

Altogether a most enjoyable evening was spent by those who braved the badly heated Tabernacle.<sup>6</sup>

After the same speech, the Nashville *Banner* called Conwell "an eloquent speaker who handles his subject in a masterful manner." The reporter then added:

He draws a number of points and surrounds them with brilliant language, clever metaphors and witty applications, and, while his lecture is brimming with humor and many jokes, one realizes that he is at the same time giving a lesson of deep and serious import.<sup>7</sup>

The Louisville *Courier-Journal* called Conwell "an entertaining talker." A Savannah *Morning News* report said that Conwell's audience was "wrapped in interest" for two hours. The Atlanta *Constitution* considered him an "eloquent and forceful speaker" who "handled his subject in an entertaining manner." The Asheville *Gazette* said:

The lecture of Dr. Conwell of Philadelphia at the Auditorium last evening was a very entertaining and instructive one and was listened to with the

<sup>5</sup>Rochester *Democrat and Chronicle*, February 13, 1901.

<sup>6</sup>Nashville *American*, February 6, 1903.

<sup>7</sup>Nashville *Banner*, February 6, 1903.

closest attention by the large crowd present, the Auditorium being more than half filled.<sup>8</sup>

Thus, all over America, from Maine to California, from Oregon to Georgia, Conwell was enthusiastically received.

## II.

What was the secret of Conwell's phenomenal success? To a modern reader, his lectures and sermons offer few clues to his great popularity. The range of topics on which he spoke and the variety of titles in his library show the wide scope of his interests. Yet, neither in his sermons nor in his lectures is there anything to indicate that he saw deeply into any particular issue of his day. The technical craftsmanship of his lectures is not particularly outstanding. Conwell himself admitted that his most popular lecture, "Acres of Diamonds," could hardly be called a model speech. He introduced it once by saying:

I am astonished that so many people should care to hear this story over again. Indeed, this lecture has become a study in psychology; it often breaks all rules of oratory, departs from the precepts of rhetoric, and yet remains the most popular of any lecture I have delivered in the fifty-seven years of my public life.<sup>9</sup>

Conwell's almost exclusive reliance on illustrations as supporting material precluded a closely reasoned argument, with various forms of evidence brought in to support each contention. Indeed, his chief use of examples was neither to clarify nor to prove, but to amplify. He did use humor, especially in his lectures, but that alone could not explain his success.

Conwell's delivery may have made a major contribution to his effectiveness. Snapshots reveal that he was a tall, well-built man, with dark hair and eyes. A reporter for the *Morning Oregonian* describes him as "tall, broad-shouldered and erect, looking very much younger than his birthdays dare indicate . . . the embodiment of strength, activity, and mental poise." Conwell apparently put himself whole-heartedly into every story he told. A newsman on the staff of the Springfield, Massachusetts, *Daily Republican* discretely

<sup>8</sup>Asheville Gazette, March 10, 1903.

<sup>9</sup>Acres of Diamonds: A Man, a Lecture, a University (Philadelphia, n.d), p. 7.

comments that the "Rev. Mr. Conwell is a magnetic speaker with the ability to cast dignity to the winds when he wishes to score a point." Victoria and Robert Case write:

His gestures were exquisite pantomime. . . . When Conwell mentioned an old man, he *was*, by faultless suggestion, a raddled oldster, hobbling and senile. Again, he would mince along with eyebrows raised and head aslant, a rich man's son, or sit, half leering, on a park bench, presumably lost in thought but his roving eye all too obviously intent on the pretty ankles tripping by.<sup>10</sup>

Conwell was a man of vitality, with a great deal of personal appeal. In his later years, his position as a distinguished clergyman and as president of Temple University helped establish his authority. Much of his success, however, was due to that intangible something called "personality." What Conwell said about Spurgeon applies to himself:

It [a sermon by Spurgeon] would move me greatly. But afterward I would read it and feel that the address was . . . weak. The difference was so great it seemed impossible that the printed page could come from the same man. He had that telepathic, or mesmeric power, so that when he pronounced a word, a sort of spiritual communication between him and his audience was sent through their hearts and through their lives. The impress of his life and spirit was mighty. . . .<sup>11</sup>

Perhaps the major factor in Conwell's success was his skilful audience adaptation. He consciously tried to make what he said apply to his immediate listeners. His introductory remarks to "Acres of Diamonds," as delivered for the five thousandth time, explain his method.

. . . this may be of interest to you for me to say that the lecture "Acres of Diamonds" has always been delivered under these circumstances: I would go to a town or city, and try to arrive there early enough to see the postmaster, the barber, the keeper of the hotel, the principal of the schools and the ministers of some of the churches, and then go into some of the factories and stores, and talk with the people, and get into sympathy with the local conditions of that town or city and see what had been their history, what opportunities they had and what they had failed

<sup>10</sup>Victoria and Robert Ormond Case, *We Called It Culture* (New York, 1948), pp. 67-68.

<sup>11</sup>Russell H. Conwell, "The Secret Door to the Heart," *The Temple Pulpit*, I, 8.

to do—and every town fails to do something —, and then go in and talk to those people about the subjects which applied to their locality.<sup>12</sup>

Newspaper accounts indicate that Conwell did achieve some success in this type of adaptation. In Westfield, Massachusetts, he once addressed an audience composed of "the young women of the Westfield Normal School" and the eleven remaining members of the Westfield G.A.R. He held his audience, "spellbound for more than two hours" and "adapted parts of the lecture to the Civil War veterans and other portions . . . to the Normal school students and his friendly old neighbors." In Savannah, Georgia, Conwell "touched on the many natural advantages of Georgia and the South," stressing the industrial possibilities in lumber and other products. Another example comes from Portland, Oregon, where he pointed out that area's potential in timber, water power, and prune growing.

A different type of audience adaptation, perhaps unconsciously practiced by the speaker, lay in the fact that he told people what they wanted to hear. Whether he realized it or not, Conwell mirrored the sentiments of those who listened to him. The theme constantly recurs in his lectures that personal success is desirable and attainable by all individuals. W. C. Crosby cynically writes that he can find little else to account for the success of "Acres of Diamonds." He declares:

Before the World War the Rev. Dr. Russell H. Conwell of Philadelphia and his lecture "Acres of Diamonds," were as standard and staple a part of the American scene as Anheuser-Busch beer, the Odd Fellows, Peruna, or William Jennings Bryan. . . .

The smug, thrifty, tightly moral American middle-class, rustic and urban, knew precisely what it wanted to hear. Conwell rose to fame and opulence by serving it its own ideas, buttered with the authority of a Baptist pontiff and spiced with illustrative stories from the lives of the great.<sup>13</sup>

Victoria and Robert Case voice essentially the same opinion in language less picturesque. They say:

Rural Americans of the Chautauqua era were supreme exponents of man's two basic urges: to survive and to advance. . . .

The urge to advance, second only to the urge to survive, was respon-

<sup>12</sup>Stenographic transcript by Harry Julier Quay of speech as delivered at the Academy of Music, Philadelphia, Thursday, May 21, 1914. Deposited in Conwellana Collection, Sullivan Memorial Library, Temple University.

<sup>13</sup>W. C. Crosby, "Acres of Diamonds," *American Mercury*, XIV (1937), 104.

sible for the phenomenal success of one phase of the over-all phenomenon of Chautauqua — the inspirational lecture. . . . A lecture which entertained was good, one which both entertained and uplifted was better, but the cream of them all was the one which both entertained and exalted, and also told the individual how he could "get ahead" on a material, down-to-earth, cash basis. . . . The outstanding gem of them all was appropriately called "Acres of Diamonds." It had top rating always, and any lecture which could even approach it was sure of an audience.<sup>14</sup>

The idea of "The Self-Made Man and the Cult of Success" is developed at length by Merle Curti in *The Growth of American Thought*. A part of his discussion reads:

So deep-seated and widespread was the hankering for the literature of individual success that the moralistic biographies of self-made men and the juvenile and adult romances of achievement could not supply the need. In spite of the advance of naturalism and secularism, many preferred to have their success stories crowned by God's sanction. To such men and women Russell Conwell was the last word. . . . The great significance of Conwell lay in the message he preached. . . . Able to recall thousands of individual success stories, Conwell distilled their essence in the famous "Acres of Diamonds."<sup>15</sup>

Further evidence that Conwell was the spokesman for the ideas of many who heard him may be found in his changing attitudes toward business men, as revealed in his sermons. By 1924, instead of praising millionaires, he was wondering how such men as "Mr. Duke" or "Mr. Rockefeller" could have amassed their fortunes. Conwell decided that it was impossible for Duke or Rockefeller to have earned their money, that "the reasonable fact [was] . . . workingmen and workingwomen earned all that money, except the millionaire's reasonable salary."

Russell H. Conwell is noteworthy among American orators not for the technical excellence of his speeches nor even for his remarkable delivery, but for his ability to communicate effectively with his audiences and his position as a typical spokesman of his generation.

<sup>14</sup>Case and Case, pp. 61-62.

<sup>15</sup>Merle Curti, *The Growth of American Thought* (New York, 1943), p. 649.

## THE BEGINNINGS OF THE LYCEUM, 1826-1840

WALDO W. BRADEN

### I.

About the time of the election of Andrew Jackson, a spirit of discontent and dissatisfaction swept over the United States. Ordinary citizens — farmers, mechanics, laborers, and housewives — dissatisfied with the *status quo*, commenced to seek for themselves and for their neighbors a fuller life, a better society, and a wider understanding of the world beyond the horizon. Reform was in the air. One of the institutions to emerge out of this social ferment was the lyceum, a great popular adult education and lecture institution.

It is the purpose of this paper to discuss the nature and growth of the lyceum movement, from its inception in 1826 through 1840, when it entered a second phase.<sup>1</sup>

### II.

The promoting and popularizing of the lyceum idea fell largely to Josiah Holbrook, an itinerant teacher and lecturer. His original interest in the movement probably dates back to the time when he heard a series of science lectures at Yale given by Benjamin Silliman. From that time on Holbrook spent his life attempting to further popular education, particularly with reference to the natural sciences. After graduating from Yale College in 1810, he joined Reverend Truman Coe in organizing and operating at Derby, Connecticut, first an agricultural school for boys, and later, in 1824 and 1825, an agricultural seminary. Neither school proved successful. During these years, as he traveled about over Connecticut and Massachusetts delivering lectures on scientific subjects and gathering geological specimens, Holbrook came face to face with the need for

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<sup>1</sup>In an earlier article I have discussed the second period of the movement. See Waldo W. Braden, "The Lecture Movement: 1840-1860," *The Quarterly Journal of Speech*, XXXIV (1948), 206-12.

a means to improve the common schools and to give adults opportunities for further study.<sup>2</sup> In the October, 1826, issue of the *American Journal of Education* an anonymous letter, probably written by Holbrook, suggested the formation of "Associations of Adults for Mutual Education," as a means of giving "mutual instruction in the sciences and in useful knowledge generally."<sup>3</sup>

Subsequently Holbrook explained that the objectives of these proposed associations were, first, to improve their members "in useful knowledge," and, second, to improve the common schools "by becoming auxiliary to the board of education." Conceiving "useful knowledge" to be largely in the fields of mathematics and the natural sciences, he recommended that each lyceum acquire "apparatus for illustrating the sciences and a collection of minerals."<sup>4</sup> He particularly urged teachers to participate in such programs of "self-improvement." In an unsigned article in the *American Journal of Education* they were told that here they could acquire "valuable information at very moderate expense." The writer, probably Holbrook or William Russell, said: "Few . . . who teach a district school can command the means of a complete course of education but all may sustain their share of the expense of a lyceum."<sup>5</sup> Holbrook argued that the lyceum also would provide a wholesome influence and "furnish younger people with places of resort, where their intellectual and moral faculties, where their social intercourse and amusement could be in such a channel as to refine their feelings, enlighten, elevate, and dignify their minds and soften and purify their hearts."<sup>6</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Anon., "Josiah Holbrook," *American Journal of Education*, XX (1860), 229-56. This magazine is the most fruitful source of information concerning the development of the lyceum. It was published under the above name from 1825 to 1830; then it became the *American Annals of Education* (1831-39), under the editorship of William C. Woodbridge.

<sup>3</sup>*American Journal of Education*, I (1826), 594-97.

<sup>4</sup>Soon Holbrook set up a business selling mathematical and scientific equipment. According to an advertisement in the *American Journal of Education*, cabinets, which sold for fifty dollars, contained the following: Geometry: two sheets of diagrams, twenty-four solids, several simple instruments; Natural graphy: one globe, two maps (world and American); Astronomy: one orrery, Philosophy: one set of mechanical powers; Arithmetic: one arithmetician; Geo-one tide dial, eclipse instruments; Chemistry: one pneumatic cistern, one flexible tube, one iron cylinder. A collection of minerals, "properly labeled," sold for twenty dollars. *American Journal of Education*, III (1828), 504-05.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 628.



Holbrook envisioned an organization which would include town, county, state, national, and even world branches. Village groups were to send representatives to county groups, which, in turn, were to send delegates to state meetings. The state lyceums would join in the American Lyceum, a national organization, which would participate in an international lyceum.<sup>7</sup> In many ways the proposal resembled the Mechanics' Institutes, popular at the time in England, Scotland, and Ireland. In 1824, the London Mechanics' Institute sponsored lectures on chemistry, geometry, hydrostatics, astronomy, and electricity. By 1828, one hundred of these organizations flourished throughout England and Scotland; they also were found in France and Germany.<sup>8</sup>

The spirit of the lyceum is reflected in the call to organize a group in Nashville, Tennessee. William G. Hunt, editor of the *National Banner and Nashville Whig*, put the case as follows:

We propose therefore: that a society be formed to be called the Nashville Lyceum to be open to all of respectable character who may contribute a small sum periodically to its funds, that the apartments in the upper end of the Market House or some other suitable apartments be procured, if practicable, for its meetings, etc., that the town library be connected, by some arrangements, with the institution, that suitable apparatus for illustrating popular lectures be provided, that the most valuable periodical works be subscribed for and deposited in the library or the reading room belonging to the establishment, that meetings be held at least once a week for the delivery of plain instruction upon geography, history, natural philosophy, chemistry, and other branches of science and literature—that meetings likewise be held for conversation, reading, or debating, and that special attention be given to the devising of the best practicable system for establishing common schools in this state.<sup>9</sup>

The typical town lyceum met weekly in the town hall, the school, or meeting house. Anyone who was willing to pay the small membership fee, usually two dollars a year, could participate. Ordinarily the older pupils of the common school were encouraged to become active members. For study purposes the members were sometimes divided into special interest sections, which on assigned evenings gave demonstrations for the other members. Fifteen or

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 300.

<sup>8</sup>Josiah Holbrook, "American Lyceum," *American Journal of Education*, III (1828), 503.

<sup>9</sup>See *American Journal of Education*, VIII (1860), 250.

<sup>10</sup>Quoted in Milton L. Baughn, "An Early Experiment in Adult Education: The Nashville Lyceum, 1830-1832," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, XI (1952), 235-45.

twenty persons might participate on a program. The more capable of these or even individuals from a neighboring village occasionally were asked to lecture on their specialties. In some towns lectures and group demonstrations were alternated. Many presentations were, of course, extemporaneous, but the more energetic and studious members carefully prepared and read manuscripts "with copious citations from good authority."<sup>10</sup> Holbrook said that the four requisites of an institution for popular improvement were: (1) "lectures or conversation; (2) mutual interrogatory or experimental exercises; (3) books; and (4) apparatus."<sup>11</sup>

The lyceum proved to be a self-adapting institution, which could be molded to meet the needs and desires of any community. Following Holbrook's suggestions, some groups concentrated on the study of subjects like mechanics, chemistry, astronomy, geology, botany, mineralogy, and zoology. Others broadened their interests to include cultural and practical topics. One village lyceum in 1828 listed among the subjects studied, railroading, canals, "powers and debilities of the stomach," the structure and movement of clocks and watches, fruit trees, fuel, and "various other subjects of an agricultural and domestic economy." The teacher of speech notes with interest that some discussions were conducted in the form of debates and that exercises were given in reading, declamation, grammar, and composition, particularly letter writing.<sup>12</sup> Presentations were made in the form of lectures, debates, conversation, and demonstrations.

The Concord, Massachusetts, group, for example, during its first year (1828-29), heard Reverend Bernard Whitman of Waltham speak on "Popular Superstitions"; a week later it presented Dr. Horatio Adams of Waltham on the subject, "The Natural History of Man." Later in the same year the members debated, "Would it be expedient so to amend the Constitution of the United States as to provide that the President should be chosen for six years and that he should be ineligible for re-election?" During the season of 1830-31, which ran from September to May, the members heard thirty lectures and twelve debates.

<sup>10</sup>Herbert R. Adams, "Educational Extension in the United States," *Reports of Commissioner of Education, 1899-1900*, I, 286.

<sup>11</sup>Josiah Holbrook, "American Lyceum," *American Journal of Education*, IV (1829), 50.

<sup>12</sup>*American Journal of Education*, III (1828), 629-30.

At nearby Salem, the lyceum during its first years restricted its programs to lectures on scientific subjects. In 1836-37, Daniel Webster for a hundred dollar fee addressed the group on "Popular Knowledge as Applied to Scientific Improvement." The New Bedford group likewise limited itself to discussions of popular science.<sup>13</sup>

During these years the paid lecturer worthy of the name professional, played little or no part in the programming. Those who lectured and performed came from the local community or a neighboring town.

In the cities, however, courses of lectures became popular. In Boston throughout the winter lectures were available almost any evening of the week, under the sponsorship of one of the following groups: the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, the Boston Lyceum, the Mechanics' Association, the Mercantile Library Association, and the Historical Society.<sup>14</sup>

The speaking career of Ralph Waldo Emerson gives some insight into the rise of the lyceum lecturer. Emerson delivered one of his first lectures on November 5, 1833, to the Boston Society of Natural History, speaking on the advantages of the study of natural history.<sup>15</sup> The following year he gave a series of talks to the Boston Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, considering the following subjects: Michelangelo, Martin Luther, John Milton, George Fox, and Edmund Burke.<sup>16</sup>

After this initial success he presented under his own management, a series of lectures each season in Boston from 1835 through 1840.<sup>17</sup> In 1838 Emerson was ready to declare that henceforth he would "live by lecturing which promises to be good bread."<sup>18</sup> On one series, for example, he cleared \$380,<sup>19</sup> and on another \$576 (for ten lectures).<sup>20</sup>

Emerson spoke to nearby village lyceums whenever he could

<sup>13</sup>Based on Paul W. Stoddard, "The American Lyceum" (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Yale University, 1947), Chapter III.

<sup>14</sup>Edward Everett Hale, *James Russell Lowell and His Friends* (Boston, 1899), p. 112.

<sup>15</sup>*The Letters of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, ed. Ralph L. Rusk (New York, 1939), I, 397.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 435.

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*, II, 33, 48, 60, 47, 244, 260.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*, II, 120.

<sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*, II, 60.

<sup>20</sup>*Ibid.*, III, 379-80.

arrange it. At first he charged ten dollars or less for an appearance,<sup>21</sup> but in December, 1836, he asked the Salem group for twenty dollars.<sup>22</sup> During the thirties he did not venture far from home to speak; but in the spring of 1840 he lectured in New York and Providence.<sup>23</sup>

From the lecturer's point of view, Emerson expressed the spirit of the lyceum and sensed its possibilities in the following entry in his *Journal*:

Here is all the true orator will ask, for here is a convertible audience, and here are no stiff conventions that prescribe a method, a style, a limited quotation of books and an exact respect to certain books, persons or opinions. No, here everything is admissible, philosophy, ethics, divinity, criticism, poetry, humor, fun, mimicry, anecdotes, jokes, ventriloquism, all the breadth and versatility of most liberal conversation; highest, lowest, personal, local topics, all are permitted, and all may be combined in one speech. . . . Here is a pulpit that makes other pulpits tame and ineffectual. . . . Here he [the lecturer] may dare to hope for ecstasy and eloquence.<sup>24</sup>

### III.

The immediate popularity of the lyceum idea was phenomenal. The citizens of Millbury, Massachusetts, under the guidance of Holbrook, had the honor of organizing the first branch. Close on the heels of "Millbury Branch No. One," branches sprang up in twelve or fifteen nearby villages. Early in 1827, Worcester County, Massachusetts, proudly proclaimed the first county lyceum.<sup>25</sup> By October, 1828, fifty local groups were operating.<sup>26</sup>

In February, 1829, lyceums were reported in various parts of Connecticut, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Maine.<sup>27</sup> Massachusetts led with seventy-eight town groups, and county lyceums in Worcester, Essex, and Middlesex counties.<sup>28</sup> Throughout the spring of 1831 county conventions were held in Wayne, Monroe, Court-

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*, II, 52.

<sup>23</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 260, 272.

<sup>24</sup>*Journals of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, ed. Edward Waldo Emerson and Waldo Emerson Forbes (Boston, 1911), V, 280-81.

<sup>25</sup>*American Journal of Education*, XIV (1864), 536.

<sup>26</sup>*Ibid.*, III (1828), 628.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*, IV (1829), 27.

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*, XIV (1864), 537.

land, and Ontario counties in New York,<sup>29</sup> and a state convention was held at Utica, with delegates coming from twenty-two counties.

In 1831 several state organizations made their appearances. The Massachusetts legislature, eager to have the first state lyceum, appointed a board to facilitate the project and to encourage county lyceums. A state group was organized in New York during January, in Massachusetts during February, in Maine during May, in Tennessee during October, and in Illinois during December.<sup>30</sup> Later, state lyceums were established in New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Connecticut, and Florida.

Before the close of 1831, over nine hundred towns had local societies. In January, 1832, Holbrook expressed satisfaction over the spread of the movement in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Kentucky, and Tennessee.<sup>31</sup> During 1834 Holbrook visited Charleston, South Carolina,<sup>32</sup> in order to encourage the Literary and Philosophical Society to take the lead in promoting a lyceum.<sup>33</sup> In a letter he reported, "A great part of the counties in the state [South Carolina] have organized Lyceums, with branches in most of their schools and in very numerous families. Children, by the aid of parents and teachers, are collecting family cabinets, consisting of plants, minerals, shells, books. . . ."<sup>34</sup> Thomas Smith Grimke of Charleston took considerable interest in promoting the cause. But the movement affected only a few people in Southern cities. Clement Eaton says, "It did not serve as in the North as a means of adult education and of popularizing the novel ideas and reforms from Europe."<sup>35</sup>

Besides the regular village and city lyceums, many offshoots developed. Among these were the Naval Lyceum at Annapolis for

<sup>29</sup>William Woodbridge, "Editor's Address," *American Annals of Education*, I (1831), 6.

<sup>30</sup>*American Annals of Education*, I (1831), 126, 157, 224; II (1832), 96, 411.

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*, II (1832), 110.

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*, V (1835), 470.

<sup>33</sup>See resolution passed at Fifth Annual Meeting of American Lyceum, 1836. Quoted in Appendix of Cecil B. Hayes, *The American Lyceum, Its History and Contribution to Education*. Office of Education Bulletin, No. 12 (1932), p. 62.

<sup>34</sup>Holbrook to George Washington Little, May 16, 1834. Deposited at the Boston Public Library.

<sup>35</sup>Clement Eaton, *Freedom of Thought in the Old South* (Durham, N. C., 1940), pp. 324-25.

naval cadets; the Clerical Lyceum for ministers of a Methodist Conference; the Beriah Sacred Lyceum, formed by a young men's Bible class; and the Union Lyceum of the city of Baltimore. This last group, organized in 1834, was divided into twelve branch or ward lyceums, each of which was further subdivided into departments for ladies, mothers, teachers, apprentices, and seamen.<sup>36</sup>

In 1837, with the financial aid of John Baldwin and others, Holbrook established at Berea, Ohio, a "Lyceum Village," to be the first of a chain intended to stretch across the continent. Although information is scant, apparently the original company, composed of stockholders, derived its chief income from the sale of stone from nearby quarries. Other projects included a school in which the students worked part time, a Universal Exchange Lyceum, and a teachers' seminary. Holbrook established a factory to manufacture globes and school supplies. A similar "Lyceum Village," planned for Westchester County, New York, failed to materialize.<sup>37</sup>

Another of Holbrook's dreams came true on May 4, 1831, when delegates assembled in New York City to organize the American Lyceum. The state lyceums of Maine, Massachusetts, and New York, as well as Yale and Dickinson colleges, and several county lyceums sent delegations.<sup>38</sup> The constitution, drafted at this meeting, declared the object of the American Lyceum to be "the advancement of education, especially in the common schools, and the general diffusion of knowledge." The members were to be the delegates "from State, Territory, and District lyceums." Provision was made for the admission of other delegates, invited by the executive committee. An amendment to the constitution, passed in 1832, provided that "any person" could become a "life director upon paying into the treasury the sum of \$50," and could become a "life member" by contributing twenty dollars. An annual member, "with the approbation of the executive committee," could participate for three dollars.<sup>39</sup>

The American Lyceum always met during the first part of May for a two- or three-day session. With the exception of 1837 and 1838, when meetings were held in Philadelphia and Hartford respec-

<sup>36</sup>*American Annals of Education*, IV (1834), 480.

<sup>37</sup>A. R. Webber, *Life of John Baldwin* (Caldwell, Idaho, 1925), pp. 40-43. *The American Journal of Education*, XX (1860), 235.

<sup>38</sup>Hayes, p. 7.

<sup>39</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 58-59.

tively, these conventions convened in New York, with between fifty and a hundred delegates in attendance. At none of the meetings were all of the state organizations represented. The programs of the American Lyceum ordinarily included reports by standing committees, discussions of various projects, and papers and lectures by the members and invited guests. The by-laws state that "the rules of debate observed in the House of Representatives of the United States as recorded in Jefferson's *Manual* shall be observed." Essays and lectures were presented on a wide variety of topics, including teacher training, religious instruction, the teaching of the blind and deaf, raising the standards of "female education," and the promotion of civilization and education among the American Indians. In 1837, Dr. A. Comstock spoke on "Elocution, and the cure of Stammering." At various meetings speakers from Cuba, Spain, Poland, Mexico, Armenia, and Venezuela reported on educational conditions in their respective countries. One of the special projects involved the offering of a three hundred dollar prize to the person submitting the best textbook on physiology.<sup>40</sup>

The fifth annual meeting, the proceedings of which are published in the *Annals of Education*, is probably typical of these gatherings. The convention was called to order on Friday, May 8, 1835, in the District Court Room of the Federal Court in New York City, and about fifty delegates were present. Sessions were held on Saturday morning, and on Monday morning, afternoon, and evening. Time was set aside to permit members to attend other lecture attractions in the city. Represented were the Massachusetts Lyceum, New York City Lyceum, United States Naval Lyceum, Brooklyn Lyceum, Yale College Lyceum, New Bedford Lyceum, Hamilton Literary Association of Brooklyn, Hempstead Lyceum of Long Island, and Newark Young Men's Society. The program included committee reports on special projects, and reports "from Lyceums and other societies [and] schools," reports on the education of female teachers, on education in Armenia, on an Ojique spelling book, a vocabulary of the Sereculeh language and the history of that African nation, and a vocabulary of the language of the Uniapa and brief account of that group of islands in the Pacific.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>40</sup>T. Dwight, Jr., "Transactions of the American Lyceum," *Annals of Education*, V (1835), 292-300.

<sup>41</sup>*Annals of Education*, V (1835), 267-74.

There were nine meetings of the American Lyceum. No one seems to know exactly why the national group failed to meet after 1839. The last meeting was as enthusiastically received as the previous ones. Probably by 1840 the purpose for which the lyceum had been organized was served by other agencies and institutions.

#### IV.

Wendell Phillips characterized the lyceum of these early years as "an academic institution, trying to win busy men back to books, teaching a little science, and repeating some tales of foreign travel, or painting some great representative character, the symbol of his age."<sup>42</sup> Prior to 1840 the local lyceum was in truth an institution of and by the people in an immediate community. It was a meeting place where neighbors could consider mutual problems, as well as learn about many things.

Students of the adult education and library movements have laid claim to these early years of the lyceum. In their discussions, however, they often fail to give adequate attention to the various forms of public address employed at the meetings. Many persons in scattered villages and towns probably became more articulate through their participation in a lyceum. A science demonstration, debate, or lecture provided subjects for conversation and discussion, and, consequently, for practice in speaking. Someone always had to preside and to introduce the lecturers and the programs. Many persons probably first learned parliamentary procedure at a village, county, or state meeting. During these early years when the lyceum was in the "grass roots" stage, the members were generally active and creative in their participation.<sup>43</sup>

It is true that the state groups and the American Lyceum in their meetings did make the promotion of education their principal concern. In many respects some of these meetings resembled present-day teachers' conventions: resolutions urged better teacher training, education of the handicapped, strengthening of the common school, greater attention to female education, and the broadening of the curriculum. But at the local level, the lyceum served its func-

<sup>42</sup>Wendell Phillips, "The Lost Arts," *Modern Eloquence*, ed. Ashley H. Thorndike (New York, 1923), VIII, 276.

<sup>43</sup>Hayes, Part II.



tion as an educational and cultural stimulator largely through the oral activities of its members. It was the community forum of its day. It offered practical training in conversation, discussion, debating, and public speaking. Many a budding orator first tried his oratory on a lyceum. In the next period, from 1840 to 1860, the lyceum pulled in audiences for a whole host of lecturers, including Ralph Waldo Emerson, Wendell Phillips, James Russell Lowell, Bayard Taylor, Edward Everett, Theodore Parker, George W. Curtis, Daniel Webster, Charles Sumner, and many others.

## DANIEL WEBSTER AND THE SEVENTH OF MARCH

ARTHUR A. EISENSTADT

### I.

That Daniel Webster enjoyed considerable prominence in the public and political life of his time is a historical fact, disputed by none. That he was for many years champion of and spokesman for the Northern states is fairly generally conceded. That he has gone down in history as an able lawyer and legislator is attested to by the majority of the general histories as well as by the many volumes written specifically about him. That he was one of the most skilful, accomplished, and effective orators in American history is amply and sometimes even lyrically demonstrated by the reports of colleagues and contemporary newsmen, and by critical analysts of both politics and rhetoric.

Thus, in a number of spheres, Daniel Webster's reputation is secure. Such, however, is not the case in the matter of the "Seventh of March Speech" concerning the slavery compromise between the North and South. Here the man and his motives have long been vigorously and variously assayed in terms ranging from "saviour" to "Judas." In thousands of letters, in newspaper articles all over the nation, in public and private speeches by men of note and men of obscurity, contemporary appraisals of the Bay State Senator and his speech shaded from peans to Philippics.<sup>1</sup> For this one speech, and sometimes within the same region, Webster was treated with reactions varying through vituperation, disapproval, disappointment, confusion, hesitant acceptance, firm approval, enthusiasm, and frenzied gratification. Likewise, because of this speech, Webster has by some later writers been labeled a true patriot and a selfless statesman; by others, a turn-coat and a "lost leader."

Simple justice requires that a man so accused shall be found guilty through valid evidence, or acquitted. Webster deserves this justice. Let us, then, look into the case of Public Opinion vs. Daniel

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<sup>1</sup>Samuel H. Adams, *The Godlike Daniel* (New York, 1930), p. 359.

Webster, concerning the motives behind his speech of March 7, 1850. That is the aim and the scope of this paper.

## II.

The circumstances of the speech will serve as an introduction to the judgments cast after its delivery. A long series of frictions preceded the Congress of 1850. Among these were: (1) the abolition or retention of slavery in the states already established, (2) the admission of new states on a slave or free basis, (3) the vexing issue of state rights vs. federal authority, (4) the existence of an underground railroad to help free runaway slaves, (5) the repeated defiance of the Fugitive Slave Law by the Northern states. And all stood against the background of a highly emotional sectionalism that had been growing for several decades. In both the South and the North were extremists who threatened secession over the slavery question. The Congress which convened was so militant and suspicious from the very outset that it took three weeks before sufficient agreement could be reached to appoint a Speaker.

The particular event which started the protracted discussion in which Webster made his speech was the application of California for admission to the Union. There were opposing demands that she be a free state, with her own residents deciding this by vote, and that she be a state where slave-owning was permitted. As part of this issue, the entire matter of slavery and state rights in general came under vigorous examination. After lengthy and bitter debate, Henry Clay, the "Great Compromiser," suggested a plan which incorporated some of the demands of "both parts of this distracted and unhappy country." Any sacrifice, he felt, was preferable to a war "ferocious and bloody, implacable and exterminating."<sup>2</sup> A strong counter-proposal came from John C. Calhoun, southerner and veteran champion of state rights. His answer was, "The South asks for justice, simple justice, and less she ought not to take. She has no compromise to offer but the Constitution, and no concession or surrender to make. . . . If you who represent the stronger portion cannot agree to settle [our differences] on the broad principles of justice and duty, say so, and let the states we both represent agree

<sup>2</sup>D. C. Knowlton and M. Hardin, *Our Americans Past and Present* (New York, 1938), p. 441.

to separate and part in peace."<sup>3</sup> And so the affair went, with earnest and able spokesmen on both sides.

At last, on March 7, Webster arose to address the Senate. The halls were crowded with those who had come to hear him, and the moment was a tense and dramatic one. His introduction presaged the stand he was to take: "I wish to speak today," he declared, "not as a Massachusetts man, nor as a Northern man, but as an American, and a member of the Senate of the United States." He appealed for a fair hearing, sketched the history of California and the West, and pointed out that the Constitution found slavery in the Union, "recognized it and gave it solemn pledges." The excesses of both sides, North as well as South, were reviewed, and it was pointed out that while the federal laws which made for friction should be remedied, the real solution lay in the cultivation of stronger fraternal ties between North and South. As for secession, "Secession! Peaceable secession! Sir, your eyes and mine are never destined to see that miracle! I see that it must produce war, and such a war as I will not describe." In substance, Clay's compromise plan was endorsed, including the passage of a stricter Fugitive Slave Law and permission for the citizens of new states to decide for themselves concerning the admission of slavery. As if in anticipation of charges of inconsistency, Webster also had read parts of a speech he had given in 1837 which said, "I regard slavery in itself as a great social and political evil. . . . I shall do nothing . . . to favor or encourage its further extension." And he added, "I have nothing to add to, or take from, those sentiments." The peroration was an appeal to all to enjoy "the fresh air of Liberty and Union, [and] the harmony and peace of those who are destined to live under it."

### III.

The reactions to Webster's appeal were, as has been remarked, varied. Many in the North who had expected him to take a strong anti-slavery stand and castigate the South, learned with amazement and fury that he had in part upheld the South on constitutional grounds, and that the North itself had been rebuked for evading and defying the Fugitive Slave Law. Repercussions were articulate and prompt. The New York *Evening Post* observed that "Mr.

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<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*

Webster stands before the public as a man who has deserted the cause which he lately defended . . . under circumstances which force upon him the imputation of a sordid motive."<sup>4</sup> The *National Anti-Slavery Standard* wrote, "No harlequin . . . has ever yet turned so agile or so complete a somersault as has the Godlike Defender of the Constitution."<sup>5</sup> John Greenleaf Whittier, in his poem "Ichabod," penned the lines, "When faith is lost, when honor dies, the man is dead!"<sup>6</sup> Horace Mann scorned the speech with, "Webster is a falling star! Lucifer descending from Heaven!"<sup>7</sup> Sumner declared, "Webster has placed himself in the dark list of apostates."<sup>8</sup> Henry Wilson thundered, "Daniel Webster will be a fortunate man if God, in his sparing mercy, shall preserve his life long enough for him to repent of this act and efface this stain on his name."<sup>9</sup> A member of the Massachusetts legislature termed him "a recreant son of Massachusetts who misrepresents her in the Senate."<sup>10</sup> Theodore Parker, a confirmed abolitionist like Wilson, had this to offer: "I know of no deed done in American history by a son of New England to which I can compare this but the act of Benedict Arnold."<sup>11</sup> Garrison, Lowell, Longfellow, and Emerson also voiced their disapproval. Harriet Martineau, an Englishwoman whose views reached a fairly large audience, deprecated, in 1855, his "folly and treachery in striving to win the supreme honors of the state, by winning the South at the sacrifice of its and the liberties of the North [sic]."<sup>12</sup>

Not all the comments were unfavorable, however, even in the North. The *Boston Advertiser* recognized Webster's "devotion to the interest of the Union,"<sup>13</sup> even though doubtful of his policy. The *Portsmouth Journal* and the *Keene Sentinel* gave what have been described as "cautious praise of his efforts for peace."<sup>14</sup>

<sup>4</sup>Elijah R. Kennedy, *The Real Daniel Webster* (New York, 1924), pp. 122 ff.

<sup>5</sup>Adams, pp. 362 ff.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 366.

<sup>7</sup>Knowlton and Hardin, p. 424.

<sup>8</sup>John B. McMaster, *Daniel Webster* (New York, 1902), p. 317.

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 318.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 319.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 318.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 319.

<sup>13</sup>George T. Curtis, *The Last Years of Daniel Webster* (New York, 1878), p. 4.

<sup>14</sup>Adams, p. 362.

Outside the New England area, comments grew more complimentary. The *New York Courier and Inquirer* lauded the address as being "of the same conservative, constitutional, patriotic and national character as have hitherto characterized his senatorial efforts."<sup>15</sup> In Washington, the *National Intelligencer* thought his remarks "gave fresh proofs of his truly national and patriotic spirit."<sup>16</sup> The *Washington Union* claimed that "Mr. Webster had had the moral courage to risk himself for his country."<sup>17</sup> The *New Orleans Picayune* also felt that "Webster had . . . the moral courage to do what he believes just in itself and necessary for the peace and safety of the country."<sup>18</sup> Thomas Hart Benton congratulated Webster and "told him that his speech would do more toward . . . forever annihilating the idea of disunion than all the propositions and schemes for compromise that had been or could be proposed from any quarter of the union."<sup>19</sup> Such were the circumstances of Webster's speech, and such were the reactions it produced.

#### IV.

Summed up, the charges and the explanations of Webster's position are as follows: (1) He had suddenly and without warning abandoned his long and publicly held attitude. (2) He had deceived his colleagues as to what he would say. (3) He had been frightened into a cowardly retreat by threats of war and secession. (4) He had made an ignoble, time-serving bid for Southern support of his presidential ambitions. (5) He had taken an honest, courageous, non-partisan stand in order to avert war and secession. Let us see what evidence is available on each of these items.

1. *Webster had suddenly and without warning abandoned his long and publicly held attitude.* Henry Cabot Lodge presented the view that Webster's compromise speech "broke away from his past, from his own principles, and from the principles of New England, and closed his splendid public career with a terrible mistake."<sup>20</sup> As recently as 1930, Samuel H. Adams described the situation as

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, pp.361-62.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 363.

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 364.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 365.

<sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup>Henry Cabot Lodge, *Daniel Webster* (Boston, 1883), p. 323.

one in which Webster had to "deliver his great recantation and make it appear, if eloquence, special pleading and casuistry could do so, a reaffirmation of his creed."<sup>21</sup> Back of him, indeed, were pledges, public and private, of his unyielding opposition to slavery. Less than two years before, he had written to a friend, "You need not fear that I shall vote for any compromise or do anything inconsistent with the past."<sup>22</sup>

In the face of these charges, it should be remembered that Webster's speech contained no guarantee or recommendation that slavery should prevail in any new territory, but rather proposed it should be left up to the residents thereof to decide this matter. Webster deplored slavery, but at the same time he upheld the right to slavery in states which had it when the Constitution was written, for the Constitution found it there and gave it "solemn pledges." From this same respect for the Constitution stemmed his respect for the legal and binding Fugitive Slave Law.

Thus, it is with justification that Curtis observes, "It is no impeachment of Mr. Webster's statesmanlike wisdom or his personal consistency if he tried to remove all reasons for [the Southern leaders'] insisting on a right which he did not concede to them."<sup>23</sup> Elsewhere he reminds us that Webster was opposed to the extension of slavery and desirous of seeing slavery die out in its entirety, but not in a way which conflicted with the basics of the Constitution and Union. This is supported by Fuess, who writes that Webster's attitude towards slavery had been openly expressed since 1819, but that he wanted it ameliorated by moral suasion, since he felt that the national government had no right to interfere with slavery in already established states.<sup>24</sup> President Woods of Bowdoin College said in a public address, "He stood where he always had stood, and where he promised he should always be found, for the Constitution and Union."<sup>25</sup>

Further rebuttals to the charge are the statements by Dr. Lyman Abbott, "I have never regarded him as an apostate. The same passion for the Union which inspired his Reply to Hayne in 1830 in-

<sup>21</sup>Adams, pp. 350-51.

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup>Curtis, p. 402.

<sup>24</sup>Claude M. Fuess, *Daniel Webster* (Boston, 1930), I, 207.

<sup>25</sup>Kennedy, p. 141.

spired his 7th of March speech in 1850";<sup>26</sup> and that of Andrew D. White, an early president of Cornell University, who confessed, "In spite of the fact that I am still a great admirer of Theodore Parker, I think his sermon at the death of Webster did the statesman a great injustice."<sup>27</sup> Lastly, Sydney George Fisher, who in 1905 made a study of just this allegation, points out, "Later days have seen a reversed or mitigated verdict. Even Whittier and Emerson felt bound to speak in a much milder tone."<sup>28</sup> Senator George F. Hoar and John T. Morse have since acquitted Webster, as has the historian John F. Rhodes. Fisher's correspondence with R. C. Winthrop, a political colleague of Webster's, elicited the response, "I have always desired to shield him from unworthy imputations."<sup>29</sup>

In short, the great preponderance of testimony on this item seems to be clearly in Mr. Webster's favor.

2. *Webster had deceived his colleagues as to what he would say.* Joshua R. Giddings, a member of the 1850 House of Representatives, circulated the statement that Webster had told him and other Free Soil leaders he would support their doctrines when he spoke. Fuess describes having tried to check this account, and tells us he found no evidence, even in a fairly complete biography of Giddings, to substantiate the statement. As a result, he concurs with Rhodes, who also investigated this point, on the latter's polite conclusion that the accusation was "probably a mistake."<sup>30</sup>

Webster's own answer to the charge, as well as certain letters he wrote before the speech, all bear out this refutation. "Long before Gen. Tyler's death," said Webster, "I made up my mind to risk myself on a proposition for a general pacification. I attempted to sound two New England men, but found them afraid."<sup>31</sup> In a letter to a friend, he narrated that he had told Tyler, "I am not in accord with your views; I am for one general and final adjustment of all the questions involved."<sup>32</sup> To a minister who requested his support against slavery in the coming debates of 1850, Webster

<sup>26</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 149.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup>Sydney George Fisher, *The True Daniel Webster* (Philadelphia, 1911), pp. 581-83.

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup>Fuess, II, 209.

<sup>31</sup>Kennedy, p. 137.

<sup>32</sup>Fuess, II, 209-10.



wrote on January 9 of that year, "From my youth, I have regarded slavery as a great moral and political evil. It is unjust, repugnant. . . I do what I can to restrain it, to prevent its spread and diffusion, but . . . I cannot cooperate in breaking up the social and political systems on the warmth, rather than the strength of a hope that, in such convulsions, the cause of emancipation may be promoted. . . . The effect of moral causes, though sure, is slow."<sup>33</sup> Again, writing to "R. Gardiner, Esq. and others," he predicted his attitude with, "I shall do all I can to warn the country against the dangers of this intestine strife; to call both the South and the North back to a sense of their true duties and their true interests."<sup>34</sup> Peter Harvey, a life-long friend, also in mid-February received from Webster a letter which presaged the stand he would take: "I must say, for your own Government, that there will be no disunion or disruption. In a month all this will be more apparent."<sup>35</sup> Plainest of all, on March 1, he wrote to Charles Warren, "I mean to make an honest, truth-telling speech . . . and a Union speech."<sup>36</sup> A statement by Dr. Samuel C. Bartlett closes the refutation of this charge: "It [the March 7 speech] was deliberately done. Weeks before, in the evening interview sought by Mr. Clay, he had declared his purpose to take his stand 'no matter what might befall him at the North.'"<sup>37</sup>

Again, the accusation seems to dissipate before both primary and secondary evidence.

3. *Webster had been frightened into a cowardly retreat by threats of war and secession.* This view is voiced, among others, by Adams, who interprets the situation as one in which Webster "was advancing to the support of a compromise which was no less than a surrender, under pressure of fear, to the principles of slavery."<sup>38</sup>

How little frightened Webster actually was may best be judged from his words at Capon Springs, not long after his compromise speech: "I have not hesitated to say, and I repeat, that if the Northern states refuse, deliberately and wilfully, to carry into effect

<sup>33</sup>*Private Correspondence of Daniel Webster*, ed. Fletcher Webster (Boston, 1857), II, 353.

<sup>34</sup>*The Letters of Daniel Webster*, ed. C. H. Van Tyne (New York, 1902), p. 568.

<sup>35</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 392.

<sup>36</sup>Fuess, II, 208.

<sup>37</sup>Kennedy, p. 144.

<sup>38</sup>Adams, p. 351.

that part of the Constitution which respects the restoration of fugitive slaves, and Congress provides no remedy, the South would no longer be bound to observe the compact."<sup>39</sup> In short, he was not only unafraid to consider the possibility of war; he himself pointed out its legality.

4. *Webster had made an ignoble, time-serving bid for Southern support of his presidential ambitions.* It is certainly true that to be President was one of Webster's ambitions. A letter written in 1844, in reply to a query on his availability as a presidential nominee, states: "If these principles and these opinions [on constitutional rights and slavery] not now likely to be materially changed, should recommend me, I would not withhold myself from compliance with the general will."<sup>40</sup> It is, however, hardly just to remark, as has Adams, "What a desperate courage, engendered by a desperation of ambition, that venture must have required!"<sup>41</sup>

How did Webster and others appraise the "venture" as affecting his popular favor? A letter quoted before will bear repeating and enlarging: "I made up my mind to risk myself on a proposition for a general pacification. I attempted to sound two New England men, but found them afraid. I then resolved to push my skiff for the shore alone, considering that in such a case, if I foundered, there would be but one life lost."<sup>42</sup> McMaster relates that in mid-February, 1850, Webster showed no desire or intent to speak, and wrote a friend that "things will cool off."<sup>43</sup> On February 24, however, he wrote a brief note to his son: "I am nearly broken down with labors and anxiety. I know not how to meet the present emergency, or with what weapons to beat down the Northern and Southern follies now raging in equal extremes."<sup>44</sup> These are hardly the signs of a man coolly resolved to fawn upon an unfriendly South. Parker reports that he told a colleague, "I have my doubts that the speech I am going to make will ruin me."<sup>45</sup> Later, in an 1851 letter, we find: "I was not unaware, on the morning of the 7th of March last year, that I was entering upon a duty which . . .

<sup>39</sup>McMaster, p. 327.

<sup>40</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup>Adams, p. 350.

<sup>42</sup>Kennedy, p. 137.

<sup>43</sup>McMaster, p. 308.

<sup>44</sup>Fuess, II, 208.

<sup>45</sup>*Ibid.*, II, 211.

might bring into peril that favor which had long been shown me by that political party whose general principles I had for a long time steadily maintained."<sup>46</sup>

Contemporaries as well as later writers support the belief that Webster recognized this step as potential political suicide, but resolved to follow his beliefs. Robert C. Winthrop, who succeeded Webster in the Senate, publicly detailed how he differed with some of his predecessor's policies. Nevertheless, he adds, "But did I imagine that his great mind had no convictions of its own, and that a poor miserable seeking for the presidency was the only motive which actuated him? Never for a moment."<sup>47</sup> Thomas Russell declared that he "never found it was necessary to prove his loyalty to liberty by attempting to defile the tomb of Daniel Webster. . . . Long ago we learned that he saw more than others. . . ."<sup>48</sup> The Reverend C. Bartol, in 1882, attested, "That Mr. Webster sold himself outright for any promissory note of the presidential chair there is no proof, and with me no belief."<sup>49</sup> Curtis, in turn, has reasoned that since Webster's acumen was granted even by his foes, and since he knew that his speech would cost him the Whig nomination, and, in addition, realized that the South alone could neither nominate nor elect him, then as a presidential ruse the speech would have been unwise, shallow, and not at all of Webster's caliber.<sup>50</sup> Kennedy concurs with this thought. A letter by Andrew D. White admits, "From belief that Webster's course was dictated by presidential yearnings, I have come to the belief that the very reverse is the case."<sup>51</sup> In the same vein, Bergen writes: "It is only necessary to credit Webster with ordinary intelligence to realize that he must have known that his speech could not aid his political fortunes either in the North or the South, and in fact it did not."<sup>52</sup>

Considering all the evidence, it is, indeed, difficult to avoid this conclusion, since in this speech Webster rebuked both sections for excesses and wrongdoings. The verdict on this charge would, therefore, appear to be heavily in his favor.

<sup>46</sup>*Ibid.*, II, 210.

<sup>47</sup>Kennedy, p. 148.

<sup>48</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 146-47.

<sup>49</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 143.

<sup>50</sup>Curtis, p. 41.

<sup>51</sup>Kennedy, p. 149.

<sup>52</sup>Frank Bergen, *Webster's Work for the Union* (New Haven, 1928), p. 41.

5. Webster had taken an honest, courageous, non-partisan stand in order to preserve peace and the Union. On this point Southern reaction at the time of the speech was, for the most part, highly affirmative. Because of the self-interest of this region, however, its views will be passed over.

Webster himself, some six months later, after the passage of the Compromise Act, wrote privately to Peter Harvey, his friend and confidante, "I can now sleep at nights. We have gone through the most important crisis which has occurred since the foundation of the government, and whatever party may prevail hereafter, the Union stands firm."<sup>53</sup>

Judge Alphonso Taft has written of his speech, "They [Webster's critics] forget that the favor of the North was far more valuable to him than that of the South, and that Daniel Webster had on former occasions stood against his party, for principle."<sup>54</sup> The Reverend John Weiss, in a sermon in New Bedford, where feeling against Webster had run high, told his audience, "Let me repeat my belief . . . that his law abiding intellect . . . was actuated by a motive in harmony with its habits, and sustained by the spirit of the word Duty."<sup>55</sup> The Reverend Samuel C. Bartlett, at a public ceremony in New Hampshire, offered the opinion that "no more conspicuous instance could be furnished of freedom from all trammels but his own sense of duty than his noted speech on the 7th of March, 1850. . . . Many were disappointed, and I was among them, that his words were not more severe towards the South and its principles. But we can see now that this would have been to defeat his whole aim in speaking, and to precipitate the catastrophe which he strove to avert."<sup>56</sup> Thomas Russell, the "old Abolitionist," thought that Webster was blamed because his love of Union seemed to overshadow his love of liberty.<sup>57</sup> John G. Blaine commented, "The danger to the Union in which [Seward and Sumner] found a good reason for receding from the anti-slavery restriction on the territories had been cruelly denied to Mr. Webster as a justifying motive. They found in him only a guilty recreancy to sacred principles for

<sup>53</sup>Fuess, II, 240.

<sup>54</sup>Kennedy, p. 135.

<sup>55</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 139.

<sup>56</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 144-45.

<sup>57</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 147.

the same act which in themselves was inspired by devotion to the Union."<sup>58</sup> The historians Fiske, Rhodes, Benson, and Bergen also judged his act to be brave, honest, above partisan struggle, and dictated by "a love of Union." Fuess calls Webster "a great nationalist," and extends his appraisal to say, "The kind of common sense which Webster displayed may not be romantic, but it saved countless lives and it is the noblest form of statescraft."<sup>59</sup>

V.

The trial, then, is at an end. The testimony of both sides has been heard in as fair and complete a representation as possible. Only the verdict yet remains. It is that the four charges would seem to have been invalidated; the defense, as expressed in our fifth proposition, amply and soundly sustained. In sum, in the case of Public Opinion vs. Daniel Webster, the verdict is: "Acquitted with commendation."

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<sup>58</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 153.

<sup>59</sup>Fuess, II, 219.

## THE EDUCATIONAL THEATRE IN THE SOUTH: 1953-1954

EDWIN R. SCHOELL

Dramatic productions in American colleges and universities have been under surveillance for a number of years. The first survey on a national scope was carried out by John Dietrich in 1947.<sup>1</sup> Since 1950 surveys have appeared yearly in the *Educational Theatre Journal*. While the South has been represented in these surveys, no specific information has been presented showing the nature of the dramatic offerings in Southern colleges and universities. The purpose of this study is to report the activity of the educational theatre in the South, and to compare its standards of production with the standards of the rest of the nation.<sup>2</sup>

The study is based on evidence secured from the Educational Theatre Production Lists Survey for 1953-54. On a national basis, 191 colleges and universities responded to the Production Lists questionnaire. Educational institutions in the South returned forty-eight questionnaires, from which the information in this report was compiled.

During the 1953-54 season the forty-eight Southern schools that reported played 271 dramatic productions to a combined audience of 335,900 persons. A total of 7,310 students were employed in these productions, and the average number of productions per school was 5.7.

The national surveys of the American Educational Theatre Association have made use of Dietrich's classification of plays into *Standard* (drama tested by time), *Broadway* (plays having a successful run on Broadway), *Original* (premier performances), and *Miscellaneous*. The last includes musicals, children's plays, experimental plays, pageants, and other plays that cannot be classified

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<sup>1</sup>John E. Dietrich, "Survey of Dramatic Activity in American Colleges: 1946-1947," *The Quarterly Journal of Speech*, XXXIV (1948), 183-90.

<sup>2</sup>For purposes of this survey the South is defined as that part of the United States south of the Mason-Dixon Line, the Ohio River, and the southern boundaries of Missouri and Kansas.

Based on this classification, the 1953-54 distribution of productions in the South is shown in Table I.

TABLE I

CLASSIFICATION OF PLAYS PRODUCED IN 48 SOUTHERN COLLEGES (1953-54)

Category	Number of Plays	Per Cent of Total
Standard	67	24.7
Broadway	132	48.7
Original	22	8.1
Miscellaneous	50	18.5
Totals	271	100.

One out of four plays in the educational theatre in the South was of the *Standard* type. Shakespeare and Shaw were the authors into one of the first three categories. Although this division is not entirely satisfactory, it is useful as a basis for comparison.

There were twelve different titles and twenty productions of Shakespeare. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was the most often produced. Shakespeare's comedies were represented in the list in about equal proportion to his tragedies and historical plays. Seven different Shaw plays were produced a total of eleven times by the institutions reporting.

The Broadway play dominated the program of the educational theatre in the South. Approximately one-half of all dramatic activity was directed into this channel, and ninety-one per cent of the schools reported one or more productions that fell into the *Broadway* classification. In this category, comedies outnumbered straight drama, by about seventy per cent.

A satisfying number of original plays were offered during the 1953-54 season. Twenty original dramas and two premier musicals were presented as major productions. Many other original plays, particularly of the one-act variety, were tried out in workshop or studio programs. Approximately thirty per cent of the reporting colleges offered original works at the public consumption level — an indication that directors in Southern institutions have more than average interest in the development of new playwrights.

Musical plays, catalogued under *Miscellaneous*, were produced by forty-four per cent of the colleges in the South. Thirty-one musical productions, including operas, operettas, musical comedies and revues, were offered during the season. The operatic works of Menotti and Weill were the most frequently produced and apparently the most popular, although the Italian operas were substantially represented and played to large audiences. *Amal and the Night Visitors*, *Down in the Valley*, and *The Old Maid and the Thief* were played more frequently than any other musical works. There were twenty-three opera-type productions reported, compared with eight of the musical comedy variety. It is quite possible that many revues of the collegiate type were played during the season but not reported. The thirty-one musical productions represent a little more than eleven per cent of the total amount of dramatic activity.

The 271 productions by Southern colleges and universities comprised 26.6 per cent of the total number of productions in the nation. Individual Southern institutions averaged 5.7 productions for the 1953-54 season, while the average for the rest of the country was 5.2, and the national average, including the South, was 5.3 productions.

Average Southern audiences of 1,235 per production increased appreciably from the figure of 934 per production during the 1952-53 season and were somewhat larger than the national average of 1,078 — an average that has remained relatively constant over the past few years.

Table II shows that production standards in the South compare favorably with the standards of the rest of the nation. It can be readily observed that the greatest proportion of the dramatic offerings of the educational theatres in the South, as in the rest of the nation, were drawn from the *Broadway* category. The percentage of activity in this category among Southern colleges was a few points higher than the average for the rest of the country. During the previous season (1952-53) the percentage of productions in this category was 47.8 for the South and 56.4 for the rest of the nation. The fact that the production of Broadway plays decreased in the rest of the nation while increasing in the South during the 1953-54 season does not indicate that Southern audiences received programs of less substantial educational value during the same season. A study



of current and past production reports shows that during this period there occurred in the rest of the nation a modification of the trend that had brought production in the consistently popular *Broadway* category to an all-time high of 56.4 per cent for the 1952-53 season. Since production of Broadway plays has been relatively constant in the South over the last few years (about 48 per cent of the total), the reduction in emphasis that occurred in the rest of the country served only to bring the South fairly close to the current national figure. The current figures, of course, show that production in this category is being over-emphasized in all parts of the country.

Production emphasis in the South as compared with national emphasis is shown in Table II.

TABLE II

NUMBER OF DRAMATIC PRODUCTIONS IN THE SOUTH  
COMPARED WITH REST OF NATION

	No. of Colleges	No. of Produc- tions	Categories				Miscel- laneous No. %
			Standard No. %	Broadway No. %	Original No. %		
South	48	271	67 24.7	132 48.7	22 8.1		50 18.5
Rest of Nation	143	746	215 28.7	328 44.0	48 6.5		155 20.8
National Totals	191	1017	282 27.7	460 45.4	70 6.8		205 20.1

The South continues to lead in a season of strong national emphasis on diversification of activity. Southern colleges, for example, led the nation in displaying the efforts of new playwrights. More than eight per cent of their productions were original, compared with about six per cent for the rest of the country. Leadership was also evident in other areas of activity, some of which are included in the *Miscellaneous* category. Musicals, for example, comprised fourteen per cent of Southern dramatic activity, compared with ten per cent for the rest of the nation. Southern colleges also produced more pageants and engaged in a wider variety of experimental ac-

tivities, such as those associated with dance-drama, church drama, and the drama-recital.

On the other hand, however, the South lagged behind the rest of the nation in two types of activity, the first of which reflects what may be considered by some to be the greatest weakness in its program. Only ten children's theatre productions were reported and relatively few institutions — in comparison with the national average — participated in this area of activity. The percentage of activity in this area was only 3.6, as compared with 9.1 per cent for the rest of the country. It is also significant that while the national average increased from 6.2 per cent for the 1952-53 season to 7.6 per cent for 1953-54, production in the South over the same period of time dropped from 5.4 per cent. Plays by foreign authors were also produced more often in other parts of the country. The national average for this type of activity was 34.5 per cent, while the average for the South was 29.0 per cent, and for the rest of the country, 36.5 per cent.

Table III, which shows the percentage of colleges participating in selected areas of activity, reveals that Southern audiences, on the whole, enjoyed a somewhat wider range of dramatic activity than did audiences over the rest of the nation.

TABLE III

SECTIONAL COMPARISON OF COLLEGES PARTICIPATING IN  
SELECTED AREAS OF DRAMATIC ACTIVITY

	Musicals	Children's Theatre	Arena Productions	New Plays	Pageants
National	39%	27%	18%	26%	2%
South	44%	19%	21%	29%	4%
Rest of Nation	38%	30%	17%	25%	1%

Table IV, comparing the fifteen most frequently produced plays in the South for the 1953-54 season with a similar national list, is offered for interest purposes.

TABLE IV

COMPARISON OF FIFTEEN MOST FREQUENTLY PRODUCED PLAYS IN  
THE SOUTH WITH FIFTEEN MOST FREQUENTLY PRODUCED  
PLAYS IN THE NATION

South	Nation
<i>Bell, Book and Candle</i>	<i>Bell, Book and Candle</i>
<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	<i>Madwoman of Chaillot</i>
<i>The Curious Savage</i>	<i>Death of a Salesman</i>
<i>Madwoman of Chaillot</i>	<i>The Grass Harp</i>
<i>Death of a Salesman</i>	<i>The Curious Savage</i>
<i>The Imaginary Invalid</i>	<i>The Lady's Not For Burning</i>
<i>Ring Round the Moon</i>	<i>Twelfth Night</i>
<i>Our Town</i>	<i>The Country Girl</i>
<i>The Young and Fair</i>	<i>Goodbye My Fancy</i>
<i>Othello</i>	<i>The Happy Time</i>
<i>Playboy of the Western World</i>	<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>
<i>Goodbye My Fancy</i>	<i>Our Town</i>
<i>Twelfth Night</i>	<i>Summer and Smoke</i>
<i>Electra</i>	<i>The Adding Machine</i>
<i>Blythe Spirit</i>	<i>Elizabeth the Queen</i>

In summary, therefore, it may be said that Southern colleges maintained a program of educational dramatics which reflected practical diversification, creditable balance, and praiseworthy aggressiveness during the 1953-54 season. The South has a right to be proud of its leadership in the development of new playwrights and in the farsighted attitude that is helping to maintain a sound program of dramatic activity, a program both educationally significant to its participants and attractive to its audiences. One vital need, however, is apparent. The theatres of the South must not neglect the audience of the future. The children's theatre program is only one of a number of ways in which this new audience can be developed. It is, however, perhaps fundamental to all other means, especially for a generation whose world of illusion is dominated by the motion picture and television.

## SPEECH TRAINING OF AIR FORCE OFFICERS

JOSEPH H. MAHAFFEY

### I.

Nobody knows how many thousands of words race through the conduits of the Air Force every day. Nobody knows how many requests for clarification are sent up and down the chain of command. Nobody knows how many man-hours are lost while officers puzzle over the meanings of letters, directives, and disposition forms. But everybody who has been a slave to the in-and-out basket knows that clearness in communication is a "must" for efficient military operation.

The Air Force stresses the importance of skill in communication to a greater degree than many civilian educators realize. Since the founding of the Air University in 1946, training in communication skills has been considered fundamental to the education of an Air Force officer. The mission of the Air University — to prepare officers for command and staff positions — is accomplished in part by teaching the methods and techniques of speech and writing, and by developing in both faculty and students competence in problem-solving through logical thinking. This training is aimed at producing more effective commanders and staff officers, irrespective of their specialty or assignment within the Air Force.

You may be interested in what an official publication of the Department of Defense, *The Armed Forces Officer*, written for officers in all services, has to say about communication skills:

Other things being equal, a superior rating will invariably be given to the officer who has persevered in his studies of the art of self-expression, while his colleague, who attaches little importance to what may be achieved through working with the language will be marked for mediocrity. . . . Battles are won through the ability of men to express concrete ideas in clear and unmistakable language. All administration is carried forward along the chain of command by the power of men to make their thoughts articulate and available to others. . . . [The ability to communicate] is more

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essential to military leadership than knowledge of the whole technique of weapons handling.\*

How do we teach Air Force officers to speak with vigor, force, and clarity? How do we teach them to listen more critically? To write simply without jargon and gobbledegook? How do we teach them to read faster and more effectively? The purpose of this article is to present a brief survey of the communication skills instruction in the Air Command and Staff School with particular emphasis on speech.

## II.

The Communication Techniques Branch, Personnel and Administration Division, is responsible for administering the communications instruction in the Air Command and Staff School. This office of Communication Techniques, made up of one civilian consultant and seven officers, plans and conducts programs of instruction for eight courses in the school. These courses are: Field Officer Course, Squadron Officer Course, Communications-Electronics Staff Officer Course, Logistics Staff Officer Course, Intelligence Staff Officer Course, Comptroller Staff Officer Course, Judge Advocate General Staff Officer Course, and Air Weapons Course. Approximately three thousand lieutenants and captains and seventeen hundred majors and lieutenant colonels enroll each year. While some of the courses listed were discontinued in the fall of 1954, it is expected that basically the program described will continue in the Air Command and Staff School.

Since communication is a basic tool of command, and since greatest retention of learning derives from application and practice, a large percentage of the instruction in all courses is accomplished in small group discussion and problem situations. Consequently, early in all courses students are introduced to the field of semantics and the principles of effective oral expression. At the same time, they must gain an understanding of the procedures of problem solving, conducting research, using the library, reasoning processes, and human relations in order to conduct and participate in small group discussions involving the commander and his staff.

\**The Armed Forces Officer*. Department of Defense (Government Printing Office, Washington, 1950), p. 182.

At much the same time (the actual position varies with the scheduling problems of the particular course) students are led to understand the need for readable writing. Here their backgrounds in semantics, straight thinking, problem solving, and human relations merge with the knowledge they gain from their professional reading program and the volunteer reading improvement laboratory if they elect to take it.

All communication techniques instruction points toward "communications in command." The basic problem of improving the flow of ideas between the superior and his subordinate is analyzed. The blocks that prevent the smooth flow of ideas are shown, and methods for using communication skills for removing these blocks within the command-staff framework are reviewed.

In general, then, our instruction is aimed at the goal of proficiency in thinking, speaking, writing, reading, and listening. These abilities are required of all commanders, staff officers, and supervisors. Fundamentally, any Air Force activity will be effective and efficient only to the degree that Air Force commanders and staff officers understand and apply these skills to their daily tasks. We maintain that command is impossible without leadership, and leadership is dependent upon skill in communication.

### III.

The general objective of the speech program in the Air Command and Staff School is to develop in Air Force officers the ability to organize speaking material and to present it logically and forcefully. This objective arises from the very practical needs of Air Force commanders to explain missions and programs to subordinates; to brief their superiors; to speak to civilian groups; to instruct and inspire other officers and airmen; to participate in Air Force conferences and joint conferences with representatives of other services or agencies; to participate in staff meetings; and to select other officers to perform all of the preceding functions.

The following specific objectives are established as consistent with the common objectives and policies for all Air Command and Staff School instruction:

1. To increase the student's appreciation of the role of language in human relationships and military management.

2. To improve ability to organize and arrange speech materials to insure the desired response from an audience.
3. To improve ability to use examples, comparisons, statistics, and testimony in supporting ideas.
4. To develop understanding of the essentials of audience psychology, motivation, and advocacy.
5. To foster a speaking personality characterized by friendliness, sincerity, and communicativeness.
6. To foster improvement in all aspects of speech production, particularly volume, distinctness, and rate.
7. To improve ability to use visual aids during an oral presentation.
8. To improve habits of attention and analytical listening.
9. To improve ability to evaluate the speech of others.
10. To provide incentive for continued growth and increased effectiveness in communication skills.

#### IV.

As the above objectives imply, the speech program in the Air Command and Staff School does not differ basically in method and content from conventional college programs. The difference is one of emphasis. Oral communication instruction is offered from a particular point of view: the command and staff point of view. Therefore, not every kind of speaking is taught, but only speaking typically required in command and staff positions. A commander brings an entirely different orientation to the problem of briefing his staff than an after-dinner speaker or a lecturer-recitalist brings to the speaking occasion. In all instruction the Air Command and Staff School seeks to have the student visualize himself as a member of a command-staff team. It is this insistence on the command-staff perspective that imparts to our instruction in oral communication a different character from that found in the civilian college or university.

Early in each course the civilian consultant presents lectures on semantics and public speaking based on requirements established by the individual course directors. Formal instruction by lecture is kept at a minimum (five hours of lecture is the maximum currently given in any course). The stress is constantly on individ-

ual performance. Effort is made to construct speech assignments which are realistic and functional. In general, these assignments specify a staff speaking situation but permit the student to choose and adapt his subject to fit that situation. This is to insure that the student does not merely "give a talk," but that he gives a talk to *somebody*. The following assignments are typical:

1. It is Armed Forces Day and your commander, following Air Force public relations policy, has offered the services of his personnel to the local civic groups to speak on various aspects of the Air Force. The Rotary club has accepted this offer and you have been selected to speak to them. Here is your opportunity to think and talk about some aspect of the Air Force which you think is important and has not been properly brought to the attention of the public. You see this as an opportunity to create better community relations.

Prepare and deliver a ten-minute informative speech. Take care to adapt your subject, content, organization, and delivery to this particular audience and occasion. Before you begin your talk, describe the character of the audience you have in mind and any other facts your listeners ought to know.

2. Your commander has been sold on having a "live wire" Information and Education program on your base. He has assigned you the responsibility of speaking at the Base Theatre to all airmen in his command. You are to choose a subject in the area of your specialty. Your commander particularly wants you to be persuasive and obtain conviction as a result of your talk.

Prepare and deliver a ten-minute oral presentation designed to persuade your audience to believe or act. Before you begin your talk, describe the character of the audience you have in mind and ask your listeners to think in terms of that specific audience.

3. As part of your work in this course, you have been directed to prepare a formal staff study report. As you prepared your staff study report, you knew you would be asked to present the gist of it orally. That time has now arrived. Prepare and deliver a ten-minute briefing designed to inform



or persuade, as appropriate, the military group primarily interested in the findings and recommendations of your staff study.

4. Prepare and deliver a ten-minute period of military instruction. Select material which an officer of field rank might actually be required to teach. One main idea from a much larger subject area frequently lends itself to being taught in ten minutes. For example, from the extensive subject, "National Security Act," you might extract the smaller subject, "The Mission of the Air Force," for a ten-minute presentation.

Assume a given group of students. Before you begin you will orient the students as to who they are and what their background is. For example, "For the purpose of this period you will consider yourselves to be jet pilots." Students will assume that background in critiquing your presentation. In measuring the effectiveness of your instruction, students should ask: "Did I really learn what the instructor intended that I learn?"

5. You are the Staff Communications-Electronics Officer of the 7th Air Force. Your position on the staff is subordinate to the A-3, Operations and Training Division. The Commanding General has been studying plans for staff reorganization within his headquarters. He has noticed that the numbered Air Forces have placed the Communications-Electronics Officer on the coordinating staff level. He asks that you be prepared to state briefly, at the next staff meeting, your recommendations on whether your section should be raised to coordinating staff level. He points out that he is particularly interested in your reasons for your recommendations. Brief the Commanding General and the staff.

## V.

Competent criticism is, of course, vital to speech improvement. It is on this point that our speech program is most open to attack. Because of the large number of student officers involved and because of the lack of professionally trained speech instructors, we must rely upon the general Air Command and Staff School instruc-

tor, variously called "section leader" or "cubicle adviser," to critique student speeches. These non-specialists, most of whom have demonstrated aptitude for this kind of work, participate in workshops and other in-service training periods at regular intervals.

Despite the obvious limitations imposed by using non-specialist critiquers, we feel that this practice has certain advantages. There is always a danger that speech training will be considered a "frill," something for the talented few, rather than an integral part of every officer's development. But when the student sees that the entire faculty is sensitive to the need for effective speech, he is more likely to consider skill in oral expression an inherent part of military management. Not only in formally assigned speeches, but also in all school problems and exercises, the student's ability to express himself logically and clearly is evaluated. Thus emphasis on effective speech permeates the entire course to a greater extent than it would be apt to do if handled solely by a few specialists.

No standard system of grading is used in all the courses. Since we are especially interested in identifying potential Air Force leaders, we have recommended that a "word-picture" describing the student's speaking performance be a part of the evaluation program. We believe that a "word-picture" gives a more accurate indication of the student's skill to an interested agency than a T-score or a letter grade.

## VI.

The question now arises: What can the teacher of speech learn from Air Force experience? What do we do that may be useful to you and your speech program? The following ideas are not new but their importance in the Air Force program warrants our focusing renewed attention on them in civilian schools.

1. *Need for Adult Speech Training.* Experience with Air Force officers indicates a growing need for adult speech training — a need which is running well in advance of facilities offered by the speech profession. During the "course critiques," held in the last week of instruction, student officers invariably request the faculty to devote more curriculum time to the oral expression program. The Air Force officer has come to realize that speech is the lubricant that keeps ideas moving up and down the lines of communication.

He knows that the ability to speak well—to organize material clearly, to project ideas effectively, to stimulate a desire to listen and to learn—is a highly important attribute. He knows also that the higher the level of supervision, the greater the need for skill in communicating to all other levels. The literature shows that a similar demand for speech training exists throughout business and industry. Civilian schools are apparently neglecting this challenge to improve methods and materials for teaching adults.

2. *Role-Playing Assignments.* Most of the speech assignments, as indicated above, might be termed "role-playing" assignments. The student is given a speech situation and asked to "tailor" his speech to fit that situation. A specific subject is sometimes assigned. We feel that this kind of assignment has proved especially effective for both the student and the audience. Besides forcing the student out of his "student-teacher" relationship, the role-playing system gives everyone a better basis for the critique. The focus is upon the rhetorical methods used in a given situation. The critic can evaluate the interaction of speaker, subject, audience, and occasion in terms of that particular role. Such assignments also eliminate speeches of the "How to Skin a Cat" variety. They can be used successfully, however, only when the assigned roles correspond to the speech functions which the officer performs in the field.

3. *Emphasis on Invention and Arrangement.* In all instruction we place primary emphasis on the ethical and rational basis of public address. Officers are reminded that speech has dignity and integrity as well as utility—that "there is a man behind the speech." An Air Force officer has no moral right to stand before a group of people and say one word unless he knows what he is talking about. By virtue of the uniform he wears, people tend to credit him with the voice of authority whether he deserves it or not. He must, therefore, have a thorough mastery of subject matter. Similarly, clear organization is stressed. We teach that one of the most important skills a speaker can possess is the ability to organize material *for his listeners*.

Delivery, however, is neither neglected nor depreciated. We believe that the old bromide, "A man who has something to say will be able to say it," has no more validity than its parallel that a man who has an airplane to fly will be able to fly it. Our aim is to

strike an appropriate balance. Delivery factors are so easily observed and so glibly critiqued that students need to be reminded that other aspects of speechmaking are more significant.

4. *Preparation.* In teaching speech preparation we depart from conventional practice in at least one respect. Traditionally, students are told to research their subject and then prepare an outline. We strongly advocate that the student first prepare a tentative outline based on his own knowledge and experience. The tentative outline prior to research—and subject to later modification—has numerous advantages: it insures that the speech reflects the speaker's own personality and convictions; it provides him with a framework of his own; it gives him a blueprint to guide his research; it points up areas in which he lacks knowledge; it fixes a sequence of ideas in his mind; and, above all, it gives him a flexibility in his later speaking performance. We believe that if the student prepares a tentative outline prior to research and words his speech aloud while standing on his feet, he can make better use of the greatest advantage that oral expression has over written expression—the opportunity to adjust to audience reactions.

The word "dry-run" is frequently heard in the Air Command and Staff School. Not only are students urged to "dry-run" their speeches to a panel of critical colleagues, but every instructor must formally rehearse every new lecture before it is presented to the student body. Several staff and faculty members, usually four or more, attend these rehearsals in which actual classroom conditions are simulated. These formal "dry-runs" are expected to subject all instruction to a thorough analysis covering doctrine, coordination with other instruction, clarity of organization, pertinence of hand-out materials, appropriateness of training aids, and achievement of specific objectives. For every hour of instruction rehearsed, at least one hour is normally allowed for comments and observations by those present. Department Heads, take note!

### THREE INTERPRETATIONS OF THE FIRST COURSE IN SPEECH: A SYMPOSIUM

EUGENE E. WHITE, WAYNE C. MINNICK, C. RAYMOND VAN DUSEN,  
and THOMAS R. LEWIS

#### INTRODUCTION

*Eugene E. White*

The question "What should be the objectives and the nature of the first course in speech?" constitutes one of the most challenging problems faced by our profession. The practical considerations are manifest: since most students enroll only for this first course, to a considerable extent it is here that we earn prestige for our discipline and respect for ourselves as valuable members of the teaching community. If our course objectives or our procedures are impractical, we will not measure up to our greatest opportunity for service.

Admittedly, the speech profession has long recognized this fact. Consideration of the problem antedates the formation in November, 1914, of the National Association of Academic Teachers of Public Speaking, and since that time it has been a perennial subject for articles in our journals and papers at regional and national meetings. This volume of discussion has not, however, brought agreement either as to the objectives or as to the basic nature of the course. Instead of uniformity, a wide divergency of interpretations exists. In some departments the first course attempts to re-orient the personalities of students; in others, to teach a variety of oral skills, including such fringe activities as social introductions; in still others, to develop the voice and improve pronunciation.

On the following pages are presented brief explanatory statements of three currently popular approaches to the first speech

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*This symposium was planned and edited by Mr. White (Ph.D., Louisiana State, 1947), who is Associate Professor of Speech at the University of Miami and co-author of the recent textbook, Practical Public Speaking. Mr. Minnick (Ph.D., Northwestern, 1949) is Associate Professor of Speech and Head of the Division of Public Address at Florida State University. Mr. Van Dusen, (D.Sc., Michigan, 1937) is Chairman of the Department of Speech at the University of Miami. Mr. Lewis (Ph.D., Iowa, 1948) is Professor of Speech and in charge of the basic course at Florida State University.*

course. It is hoped that the publication of these statements may not only serve as a helpful guide to beginning teachers in their selection and development of a basic philosophy, but that it may also stimulate constructive re-evaluation of their work by teachers long in service.

#### THE PUBLIC SPEAKING APPROACH

*Wayne C. Minnick*

Some educators have high hopes for the first speech course. They expect it to do many things—teach students to listen critically, to act naturally and purposefully, to speak with cultured, animated voices, to read aloud with a strong sense of communicativeness, to discover and evaluate evidence, to reason correctly, to organize speech materials with unity, coherence, and emphasis, and, not content with these, they expect to attain a number of additional goals which I have no space to enumerate.

All of these are laudable aims, without doubt, and if they were attained, we should have no need for other courses in the speech curriculum. But I am afraid that in our efforts to do much we often succeed merely in doing little. I once went duck hunting in Indiana with a man who overestimated the power of a shotgun. He seldom shot at a single bird, but aimed at the entire flock, on the assumption, I suppose, that if he shot at many he would kill many. In reality, he killed far fewer birds than those of us who were content to aim at a single target.

It seems to me that the potentialities of the first course, especially when it is only a semester or a quarter long, are overestimated in the same way as my hunter friend overestimated the power of his weapon. We are shooting at too many birds, and often we do not hit any with sufficient impact to do any good.

It is my belief that the first course can attain only a few goals well. I do not think it can teach oral reading, and listening, and conversation, and discussion, and persuasive speaking, and a number of other things all at the same time, and accomplish much of lasting effect with any of them. Consequently, I would narrow the aims of the first course to one or a few of the most valued goals.

Enabling a student to speak persuasively in public should be, in

my opinion (and I am aware of bias), the most cherished aim of the speech curriculum. Often in our concentration on conversation, listening, voice and diction, and other aims, we forget that the foremost requirement for effective participation in a democratic society is persuasive speaking in public. In a democracy the best candidates are elected and the wisest decisions on public issues are made only when all sides of a problem are presented with maximum effectiveness. Wise action is often frustrated and buffoons elected to high office because the spokesmen for wisdom speak poorly while the champions of error are adept, to put it mildly, in the means of persuasion. Gladstone wrote in his essay on public speaking:

... truth is not necessarily loved when seen: ... she is not necessarily seen when shown: ... she is not necessarily shown when intended and honestly attempted to be set forth through the imperfect medium of language, and by faculties in a still more imperfect state of self possession.<sup>1</sup>

If the truth is to prevail in public deliberations, if it is to be shown when intended, to be seen when shown, and loved when seen, then it must be presented by advocates who are at least as skilled as those hired by the propagandists and the pressure groups.

The first course, constituted as a public speaking course, is dedicated to the purpose of training young people to speak the truth honestly and to speak it well. This purpose seems to me to have a greater claim on our efforts in the first course than some others which, while they may contribute to the ideal of good men skilled in speaking, do so only obliquely and, hence, with diminished probability of success.

The propositions I have presented have been few and simple: We can achieve only a few goals in the first course with any degree of success. There is a need to diminish, therefore, the multiplicity of goals that often characterize it. In reducing the number of these goals we must retain those which are of greatest value. Persuasive speaking in public, as the special technique of democracy, is, in my opinion, the aim which offers the greatest values both to the individual and to the society of which he is a part.

I do not know how convincing these arguments have been. Possibly they have failed. If so, then I point to myself as an instruc-

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<sup>1</sup>Loren Reid, "Gladstone's Essay on Public Speaking," *The Quarterly Journal of Speech*, XXXIX (1953), 267.

tive example of the need for more skilful and persuasive public speakers.

#### THE VOICE AND DICTION APPROACH

*C. Raymond Van Dusen*

My advocacy of the voice and diction approach grows out of experience with a speech survey which has been made annually at the University of Miami since 1947. Because of the large number of persons whose voice and/or diction required improvement each year, I have come to believe that these two factors should receive attention before the student enters upon subjects which stress platform appearances.

In conducting the speech survey at Miami, members of the staff check the voice and diction of each entering freshman and transfer student by having him read aloud for a period of one-half minute. In the fall semester of 1953 a total of 1,971 students were tested. Findings on this group were as follows:

	Number	Per Cent
Speech satisfactory .....	1230	68.7
Diction needs improvement.....	125	07.0
Voice needs improvement .....	303	16.9
Both voice and diction need improvement.....	28	01.6
Speech needs clinical attention.....	105	05.8

In line with the need thus indicated, voice training and diction are offered as separate courses on the freshman level during each semester, and students may elect to take either or both courses depending upon their individual needs. The courses in speech fundamentals and public speaking are offered on the sophomore level.

Students with below average or poor voices, but whose vocal problems are non-clinical, are advised to take the course in voice training. Objectives of the course include general voice improvement and the correction of minor defects of pitch, quality, and loudness. Ear training and vocal hygiene are stressed.

The course in diction is designed to correct dialectical substandardisms and to bring about general improvement of articulation and enunciation. Special sections in diction are available to foreign students at the freshman level.



This arrangement whereby courses in voice training and diction follow the speech survey and precede courses in speech delivery appears logical for several reasons: (1) Inasmuch as 25.5 per cent of our school population need training in voice and diction just above the clinical level, it seems advisable that such help should be offered early so as to give students the basis for good speech in all speaking situations. (2) Experience has shown that students who have taken courses in voice training and diction gain in assurance and, as a result, possess greater confidence in the fundamentals and public speaking courses. (3) The teaching of voice training and diction requires more time than is usually devoted to it when these two basic factors are included among the objectives of a course in the fundamentals of speech or public speaking. (4) This course arrangement provides at the basic level the training in voice and diction which is fundamental for students interested in drama and radio-television.

Admittedly, under the voice and diction approach as here described, many students may use up so many elective hours that they have no time left to take additional speech courses on the sophomore level. On the other hand, there is reason to believe that in many cases this procedure encourages additional speech elections. Certainly, once the fundamentals of voice and diction are mastered, the student may proceed with greater confidence to courses in discussion, persuasion, oral interpretation, drama, and radio.

#### THE COMMUNICATIONS APPROACH

*Thomas R. Lewis*

The communications approach operates from the belief that the first course in speech should be directed to these ends: (1) students may learn to send oral messages in such fashion that they have a good chance of being received as intended, and (2) students may learn to receive oral messages in such fashion that the reception approximates the sender's intent. Since this first course will be, for most students, the last course as well, it seems reasonable that it should drive towards the most pressing need of all students. This is a course for everyone — not for the handicapped, not for the talented, but for all. And, if we aim at communication as the vital

principle, we cannot be concerned with a single type of oral communication such as is presented in a course in public speaking.

To say, however, that sending oral messages so they may be received and receiving oral messages as they were sent constitute the goals of the communications approach oversimplifies with considerable abandon. To reach these goals we must certainly be concerned with the purpose and quality, as well as with the accuracy of the messages sent, and also with a critical analysis of messages received. With such goals in mind, it would appear that at least four things will characterize the communications approach: (1) the student will be given many opportunities to practice, (2) the emphasis will be upon content rather than form, upon clarity rather than artistry, (3) training will be given in listening as well as in speaking and reading, and (4) training will be offered in several of the types of oral communication.

With relation to the first point, it is imperative that each student be given an opportunity to practice as often as possible—in a high school class at least twice a week and in a college class at least once a week. These practice exercises should allow for adequate criticism by students as well as the instructor, and in both oral and written form. Each performance should have one authoritative critic and as many apprentice critics as there are members of the class. The speech classroom is not a place to knit socks, do trigonometry problems, or read *Esquire* magazine. There is little place in this classroom for extended lectures on the part of the instructor, no matter how scintillating these may be. And, although textbook assignments may be read with profit, the guiding principle should be to "learn by doing."

In the second place, there must be a strong emphasis on the kind and quality of subject matter, and on the desire to transmit that subject matter to an analytical audience. There must be a healthy need to communicate, as well as something worthwhile to communicate. This need must grow out of the experience of the talker, as well as out of the general interests of the listeners. For example, in a "how to do it speech" a student should not select a topic such as "How to Mine Gold in the Klondike." One of the hardest things to teach about the selection of subject matter is that usually the best speech topics are not found in the *Reader's Digest*, *Harper's Bazaar*, or in an encyclopedia. Moreover, the subject matter and

materials used, whether in speeches, discussions, or oral readings, must be worth the time of the performer in preparing them for his audience, and they must be given with the purpose of stirring up an intellectual or emotional response. With such objectives clearly understood, student speeches on how to sharpen lead pencils, change tires, and polish shoes will soon disappear. Naturally, the ideas presented should be organized in clear patterns and clothed in verbal vestments in a fashion that will provoke attention and promote ease of understanding.

The instructor in such a course will be forced to put less emphasis on grammatical form, precise pronunciation, a well-modulated voice, and effective gestures. This is not to say that such means of communication are unimportant. Of course, we must be concerned with grammar and pronunciation, but only as these elements affect the communication process — as they affect the sending of messages or the receiving of them. We are concerned with them as means to an end, and not as ends in themselves.

In the third place, if the emphasis in this course is upon the communication of ideas, the course must be directed toward student training in both aspects of oral skill, listening as well as speaking. Too long, it would seem, we have exerted our efforts as teachers of speech upon the sending end of the oral communication process, with little or no attempt to improve the receiving end. Poor receivers have ruined many a beautiful forward pass; poor receivers have ruined many a radio program; and poor listeners have garbled or failed to catch completely many a good oral message. Attention to instruction in listening can be attacked in at least three ways: (1) instruction can be given in how to listen just as instruction is given in how to speak, (2) every student speech can be made a real listening exercise, and (3) prepared tests may be given over materials presented orally by the instructor. As has been demonstrated in many classrooms, the listening ability of students can be improved through such exercises.

Finally, the beginning course built upon the communications approach must give practice in several of the forms of oral communication. It should include different types of formal speaking, experience with conversation and discussion exercises, and practice in reading from the printed page. The extent and kinds of coverage will depend upon the length of the course. Any close observer

must surely believe that the skills of oral reading are seriously deficient in a high percentage of students at the college level. Few students can read with adequate emphasis on ideas, and fewer still can maintain audience contact while reading. Many cannot even read the words on the page; they leave out and put in words, as if they had a license to do so. Some stumble along word by word, and plow every line under with a fingernail.

In summary, therefore, since most students will take only the first speech course, this course should stress those aspects of training which the largest number of students need — i.e., the clear speaking of ideas and the critical interpretation and evaluation of materials listened to. These objectives can best be accomplished by frequent practice in many forms of oral communication.



## WORKSHOP

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### A CONTROVERSIAL ISSUE SPEECH

WILLIAM S. SMITH

Instructors in public speaking are constantly looking for new types of speech assignments. This is an attempt to offer a first-course assignment that may provide a fresh approach to accepted objectives, or, at least, relieve the instructor from the monotonous, recurring pattern of speeches he listens to over the years.

The assignment is a "controversial issue" speech, and should be scheduled for about the middle of the term. A "controversial issue" is explained as a subject familiar to the audience and one about which members of the class have formed opinions, but a subject upon which opinions differ. Our society is rife with controversies. One need only talk to people, read the newspapers, listen to the radio, or view television in order for appropriate subjects to suggest themselves.

The purpose of the assignment is to help the student develop his potentialities as a speaker by dealing with well founded ideas on a subject in which he is interested and about which he has firm convictions. The specific objectives (in addition to those carried over from previous assignments) are: (1) to emphasize research as part of speech preparation, (2) to improve speaking through effective thinking, and (3) to help the student speak forcefully from conviction.

The assignment proceeds as follows: Each student speaks five minutes in support of a particular position. At the conclusion of his speech, he remains at the rostrum to answer questions from the audience. During the question period he yields the floor to any member of the class who wishes to make an impromptu speech on

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*Mr. Smith (Ph.D., Stanford, 1953) is Associate Professor of Speech and Director of Forensics at Alabama Polytechnic Institute. The assignment here suggested is based upon a project which has proved successful in the beginning speech course at that institution.*

the subject. These speeches may defend or attack the position of the original speaker. Critical evaluation is delayed until the discussion of the subject has been terminated.

Experience reveals that this assignment has several merits. Because the speaker knows he will be questioned following his speech, he tends to prepare more thoroughly than for other speeches, and thus has the backlog of information that lends conviction in presentation. Some students appear at ease for the first time and reach their highest degree of effectiveness in delivery as they answer questions. The question period itself provides an opportunity to evaluate the immediate audience reaction, while specific questions often point up errors in organization, analysis, and use of evidence. At the same time, the student learns the value of complete and accurate research. Well founded statements go unchallenged; statements of personal opinion are usually questioned. Thus the speaker experiences the testing of his speech by the audience. He also gains some experience in presiding over the class, maintaining order, and recognizing contributors. Most important of all, perhaps, the speaker usually becomes absorbed in his topic, takes personal pride in his point of view, and is anxious to defend his position. The "controversial issue" speech stimulates the student's thinking and allows him to express himself sincerely on the various phases of his subject.

The members of the class, in turn, benefit by having an opportunity for constant participation. Because they can ask questions and give impromptu speeches, they listen more closely, think about the subject, and are more critical of the speaker and his speech. The students who speak impromptu speak in a realistic situation, exercising their powers of analysis and their ability to organize ideas in reference to a serious subject already discussed. Most students thoroughly enjoy the assignment.

There needs to be a word of warning to the instructor, however. Only three or four speeches can be handled adequately in the customary fifty-minute period. Although some topics may arouse few comments, discussion on others will have to be terminated to the frustration of the group. Quite often more than one student will want to make an impromptu speech on the same subject. Care should be taken not to rein participation so sharply that the original objectives cannot be obtained. Complete freedom of participation, on the other hand, will cause the class to break down into a forum

on public affairs, with the assignment taking weeks to complete. A degree of informality and flexibility has been found to be most successful.

Not all students will volunteer to make impromptu speeches. This number will be small, however, if the students are reminded that such a speech is required and that those who fail to volunteer will be asked to speak on a subject selected at random. A period is set aside at the end of the assignment for those who do not volunteer.

The assignment as a whole is designed to stimulate better speaking through intrinsic motivation. That it achieves this goal is evident from experience with it in twenty-three classes of beginning speech.

**LEW SARETT, 1888-1954**

Lew Sarett, professor of speech at the University of Florida, died the morning of August 17, 1954, following a series of heart attacks. Born in Chicago, Illinois, on May 16, 1888, he was educated in the public schools of that city. He received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Beloit College, a Bachelor of Laws from the University of Illinois, and the honorary degrees Doctor of Letters from Baylor University and Doctor of Letters of Humanity from Beloit College. He began his teaching career in 1912 at the University of Illinois, joined the staff of Northwestern University in 1920, and continued there as professor of speech until 1951 when he came to the University of Florida.

Lew Sarett soon found himself at home in the Southland. His early love of the outdoors that was evident when he was a woodsman, guide, and forest ranger for many years, continued throughout his life, and he easily transferred his affection for the spruce and fir to the Southern pine, cypress, and oak. A keen observer of nature, he gloried in the riot of tropical colors he found on our lakes and rivers. A poet by nature and profession, the love of natural beauty was always present and had its expression in the beautiful roses that partially surrounded his home, for Gainesville, Florida, was really home to Lew Sarett.

In the classroom he had a way of engaging the attention and winning the affection of his students. If ever a man had the magic touch that inspired students, he had it. While his feet were planted firmly on the ground, his ideals soared to intellectual heights. Lew Sarett was a straightforward, genuine man who believed in the golden rule and exemplified the man of good will. He detested and despised artificiality and pseudo-sophistication. He was as generous in his praise of work well done as he was quick to denounce a false and shabby effort.

Lew Sarett will live on, not only in the memory of his students and colleagues, but so long as poems are read and textbooks in speech are studied.

H. P. Constans





## Book Reviews

JAMES GOLDEN

GENERAL PHONETICS. By R.-M. S. Heffner. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1952; pp. ix + 253. \$3.75.

This is by all odds the best treatment of the subject of general phonetics which this reviewer has had the privilege of examining. The treatment is comprehensive and scholarly. The author's purpose is clear and positive: he proposes "to set forth in some detail how speech sounds are produced, what they are when they are produced, the manner of their production and their nature when they are applied in speech forms" (p. 9). It is to this exposition that he applies the term "general phonetics."

Although Professor Heffner exhibits a thorough understanding of current phonetic theory, he refuses to permit his knowledge to interfere with the intelligibility of the presentation. He has succeeded, as some other recent writers on this and other aspects of communication have not, in avoiding the temptation to becloud the discussion with what Dewey called the "dialectic of concepts." The development falls into neither of the two types of "learned balder-dash" of which Professor Viner wrote in the February, 1954, *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, "the simple type where the author believes he understands what he is saying but cannot make it intelligible to his readers," or "the compound type, where neither author nor readers can make anything of the text." Professor Heffner both understands what he is saying, and possesses the ability to make it clear to his readers.

The book is divided into an Introduction and two Parts. The Introduction sets forth the author's basic position, and the approach to the entire problem of general phonetics. To the problem of the movements of the speech organs he applies the term "genetic" investigation; to that of the acoustic phenomena after the sounds have been produced, the "gennemic" investigation. Both aspects are covered throughout the text.

The treatment of the physiology and physics of speech (Part I), although brief, is adequate to an understanding of the phenomena of sound production, which are presented in detail in Part II. In describing the more common sounds of speech the author follows more or less generally accepted data, recognizing that any classification or description may be applied directly only to the sounds of the dialect from which they are derived. Thus "one may speak of the English phoneme [t], or of the French phoneme [t], but not of the phoneme [t]" (p. 72).

Despite the general excellence of the treatment, a question of phonetic theory, as it is here presented, almost inevitably arises. No one can seriously criticize an effort to be precise in the matter of classification and differentiation of speech sounds. While, as the author points out, minuteness of detail may be quite unnecessary in linguistic analysis, it is essential in phonetic analysis.

Furthermore, if fine distinctions are to be made a symbolization is necessary in order that we may be able to discuss them adequately.

One raises the question, however, how far such analysis can go without running into difficulties somewhat comparable to those encountered by the spelling reform enthusiasts a half century or more ago; they discovered finally that there was a point beyond which simplified spelling became an utter absurdity. For example, the author points out the easily recognizable fact that the initial consonant in *keel* is not the same as that in *cool*. He even provides the symbol [c] for the former and [k] for the latter. But what is to be done with the corresponding consonant in *cut*? Is it the same as in either of the other two, and if not, why not provide a special symbol for it? In moving successively from *keel* down through the front vowels to *cot* and up the back vowels to *cool*, are we not faced with the fact that the [k] here changes with each change of vowel; and that, to be consistent, we should recognize that change with appropriate symbolization? Of course, the problem lies deeper than that of merely finding a symbol for each of the possible variations of any given phoneme. Would it not simplify the entire question to point out once and for all the general phenomenon, and give the reader to understand that any sound is affected by its phonetic context, with some definite indication of the nature and possible extent of such influence?

Furthermore, if the initial consonant [k] is to receive such recognition, what about other consonants, such as [ʃ]? Is the fricative in *she* the same as that in *shoe*, or *shut*, or *shall*? Does not the same principle operate here as in the velar stop (p. 125) or the mediopalatal stop (p. 126)? If a separate symbol is necessary for the *g* in *goose* and the *g* in *geese*, why is the same symbol used for the *sk* in *she* and the *Sch* in *Schule*? These are obviously merely illustrative of the basic question.

This question has to do with the degree to which it may be profitable, even from the phonetic point of view, to set up such minute differentiations, further than to recognize that, for example, phonetic context does have a significant bearing on both the genetic and the gennemic aspects of the sounds of speech. Many of us may find ourselves in the position of one of my students last year from Okinawa. He insisted that in his language there was a *ga* and a *go* but no [g].

It may be an insignificant point, but the statement (p. 112) that "the consonant clusters [bj], [kj], [dj], [fj], [hj] are not found in English before any vowel other than our problematical [u]" is open to question. (The discussion here concerns the problem of [u] in diphthongs.) What can be said of such words as *bureau* (not always pronounced with a [bju]), *curate*, *endure*, *fury*, *Huron*? If the [k] in *keel* is to be distinguished from the [k] in *cool*, then surely the stressed diphthong in *fury* can be distinguished from that in  *futile*.

The book is still worth having. Every advanced student of general phonetics will find in it much that is usable. Even those who have difficulty in ferreting out what meaning there may be in "learned balder-dash" will have little or no difficulty in getting a great deal of value from the very clear presentation.

GILES WILKESON GRAY

Louisiana State University.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE THEATRE. By Frank M. Whiting. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1954; pp. 315. \$4.50.

Dr. Whiting's new book grows out of his teaching, since 1938, a course called "Introduction to Theatre"—a cultural appreciation course not restricted to theatre majors. His writing reflects the richness of this course, and helps explain why it has become one of the most popular on the Minnesota campus.

In covering theatre literature, acting, directing, costuming, make-up, theatre architecture, scenic design, stage lighting, and other theatre crafts, as well as a discussion of the theatre's place in society and in art, and theatre as a profession, Dr. Whiting has had to be selective to a high degree. He has chosen not to write a technical "how-to-do-it" book, but one which states general principles, cites major problems, and attempts to interest the student in further study and participation.

He has succeeded in achieving his goal. The writing is direct, clear, and personal. While not "written down," the text should be clear to the intelligent undergraduate. Dr. Whiting's point of view is historical and philosophical; he tells accurately what theatre has been in the past and expresses interesting opinions about what its future may be.

Because of its high interest-getting quality, Dr. Whiting's book could be used effectively as a basic textbook in the kindred "theatre practice" kind of course which combines acting, stagecraft, and some directing. As the need arises, the instructor might supplement it with laboratory experiences and readings in the "how-to-do-it" manuals.

The weakness of the book is that its dominant focus is not always maintained. There is some material, such as that on A.E.T.A., A.N.T.A., and N.T.C., which seems more suitable for the professional journals. There are discussions of teaching philosophy and the place of theatre in the liberal arts program that will certainly interest the teacher more than the student.

Moreover, while Dr. Whiting writes brilliantly of the worth and purpose of theatre in his Introduction, "Why Theatre?" he fails to do as well with his final chapter, "The Theatre as a Profession." Being honest, he paints a bleak picture of professional opportunities in the present-day legitimate theatre. He then makes the valid point that the professional theatre student should make himself into a theatre-builder like Margo Jones or Frederick McConnell. But he fails to dwell upon the opportunities in this field long enough to make the prospect very attractive to those who do not already know of such projects.

JOSEPH BALDWIN

*University of Mississippi*

SPEECH: DYNAMIC COMMUNICATION. By Milton Dickens. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1954; pp. vii + 440. \$4.50.

In this book Milton Dickens has given a thoughtful communication of his own teaching experience to the beginning student in speech. Well organized so as to have the appearance of extreme simplicity, the text emphasizes those elements which point the direction to teacher and student alike. An element in its simplicity is the pictures which form an effective audio-visual aid slanted in the grooves of the entire work.

While the analogies are at times arbitrarily chosen—for example, the

opening comparison of the speaker and the prize fighter — they are, nevertheless, graphically illustrative of the principles underlying the book: that public speaking must be learned; that success in speaking is earned; that there is no short cut. Exhibitionism is ruled out in the early chapters, and a practical approach to communication is substituted.

Individually, each chapter is a well-organized unit, with a topical preview and summary that should slap the dullest mind with a cognizance of what is going to be said and what has been said. All this, plus pictures that say it all again, makes for a work sufficient to persuade the student toward intelligent speaking goals.

Especially well done is the chapter on "Vocal Communication." Here the physical aspects of tone production and the practical aspects of the individual's opportunities to speak are integrated in a manner rarely found in beginning textbooks. The student, furthermore, is stimulated to use the exercises suggested, and the teacher himself is aided by brief discussions of speech problems and examples of corrective exercises.

The single chapter which has a suggestion of ineffectiveness is that on "Language and Fluency." It is ineffective only because it does not have the completeness necessary to its subject. In its approach to words and their appropriateness, however, it is still suggestive enough to induce the teacher to carry the implications further in the development of effective language skills.

The final sections of the book are excellent. The five chapters on speech construction are themselves a practical workshop in the art of organizing a speech. And the last division, which discusses "Basic Speech Processes," brings forth the chief aim of the work successfully — developing the speaker as a *part* of a communicative speaking situation in which an audience is an equally necessary *part*. No student, after finishing this book, will continue to think of himself as an exhibitionist drawing the admiration of an audience to his rare accomplishment — his speech. He will see himself, rather, as a natural part of a natural process of intelligent communication. Mr. Dickens is indeed to be complimented on making such an approach evident in his readable work.

MERRILL G. CHRISTOPHERSEN

*University of South Carolina*

THE TEACHER SPEAKS. By Seth A. Fessenden, Roy Ivan Johnson, and P. Merville Larson. New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1954; pp. xi + 357. \$4.65.

This book is a puzzling one to review. It includes both practical and theoretical materials; both methods and philosophy in the field of speech education. Where the book considers the newer semantic or socio-psychological approaches to the teaching of speech, or the role of speech in teaching, it is excellent. Wherever it turns its attention to the more traditional fundamentals of composition and performance, it tends to oversimplify and to generalize. Thus, Chapter VII, on the interview and conference, is both lucid and practical; Chapters VIII and XI, on interpersonal relations within a group and group dynamics, are extremely helpful; and Chapters I, II, and III offer a praiseworthy over-all philosophy of what speech education can be. On the other hand, Chapters IV and V, on the use of the voice and articulation, and Chapter IX on speech therapy, are particularly guilty of oversimplification, and,

in their concern with detail and drill, seem philosophically out of keeping with the rest of the work.

The paradox of the book may, perhaps, be explained by one of its basic assumptions. Personality is thought of in terms of a person's overt behavior pattern. "Personality is not what we are but what we show ourselves to be" (p. 3). This notion affects both the process of education, and its goals, obviously centering them in the potentialities of the interrelationships between individual and individual, or individual and environment. Speech as considered in this book, therefore, is not a simple stimulus-response action, but is, instead, inextricably and complicatedly tied in with the total person-in-context. "Attitudes and abilities both become qualities of personality only as they are projected into action" (p. 12). This explains the sizable sections on sociometry, sociodrama, group dynamics, and the like; and the relatively shorter treatment given the usual rhetoric of speech composition and delivery.

The first three chapters offer a general philosophy of speech as an aspect of human behavior, and as a principal manifestation of personality. The next three chapters suggest activities for the teacher, or would-be teacher, to undertake in order to improve his teaching effectiveness through speech training—use of the voice, articulation, and general speaking activities. Chapter VII takes up an aspect of the teacher's job where speech is important—conferences. Chapters VIII, IX, and X are designed to help the teacher encourage and improve the speaking of his students—building group spirit, rudimentary therapy, and speech activities. Chapters XI and XII move back to the teacher's own speech needs—speech in society, and aids to self-analysis.

Quarrel might be picked with the emphasis on breathing, and the confident assertion that descriptions of how to produce a sound will yield accurate and uniform results. But these are minor objections and reflect personal training and bias. Where the book is good, like the little girl in the nursery rhyme, it is "very, very good."

*The Teacher Speaks* might profitably be the "one new educational book a year" that teachers read after they get out of college. It is beautifully printed and bound, and, in places, challengingly written. It is a useful source-book, particularly for the non-speech teacher, or the beginning teacher of speech in the elementary or secondary school. Its purpose is unusual, and in a sense puzzling; the matter is not qualitatively uniform, but the book is definitely worth reading.

DONALD H. ECROYD

*University of Alabama*

SPEECH FOR THE TEACHER. By Fred S. Sorrenson. New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1952; pp. xiv + 471. \$4.50.

Approaching the field of speech from a primarily behavioristic viewpoint, Dr. Sorrenson presents a book that is something of a paradox. Its greatest strength is also its greatest weakness. Trying to get before the classroom teacher all of the information which he needs in order to speak well and to teach well, the author presents a content too wide for complete mastery in the usual college course, and too shallow for a scholarly comprehension of what speech can do for the personal and professional effectiveness of the teacher.

Dr. Sorrenson partially overcomes the problem with a rather tightly organ-

ized, logically developed outline of four major parts. An overview of two chapters in thirty-three pages is devoted to a discussion of speech and the personality of the teacher; Part Two consists of six chapters of 145 pages on "Basic Speech Skills"; Part Three is made up of ten chapters of 177 pages on the "Forms of Speech"; while Part Four has three chapters of thirty-one pages on the "Teaching of Speech," and "Indices of Names, Titles, and Subjects."

While there is considerable footnoting scattered throughout the book, there is no organized bibliography. Neither are there suggestions for further reading, an omission which seems important in a book of this sort, especially at the end of very briefly treated subjects. Nevertheless, Dr. Sorrenson is to be commended for attempting a book which calls attention to the importance of good speech in the classroom, and which undoubtedly can be effective as a point-of-departure textbook.

CHARLES A. MCGLOM

*Southern Baptist Theological Seminary*

APHASIA THERAPEUTICS. By Mary Coates Longerich and Jean Bordeaux. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1954; pp. xiv + 185. \$3.75.

In his Forward to *Aphasia Therapeutics*, Dr. Harold Rose of the Henry Phipps Psychiatric Clinic at Johns Hopkins Hospital writes: "Drs. Longerich and Bordeaux have accomplished an almost Herculean task in organizing in this book, clearly and readably, and almost in outline form, those aspects of the subject which are of clinical importance in the field of aphasia therapeutics. Theoretical material is summarized, but only insofar as it helps make understandable—and possible—treatment of the aphasic phenomena themselves. . . ." Dr. Rosen's statement is an excellent review of the book.

Drs. Longerich and Bordeaux are apparently aware of the fact that relatively few aphasics ever reach "aphasia centers" for the idealistic type of therapy described in most textbooks on the subject. Specific therapies for many types of aphasic disturbances are presented, together with instructions for making specific diagnoses. The authors note, of course, that aphasia almost never is characterized by a single, simple symptom, and, consequently, that many of the therapies listed may be used for more than one "type" of aphasia.

Chapter IV, "Symptomatology," draws heavily upon other works, particularly those of Kurt Goldstein and J. M. Nielsen. In this chapter, the authors have done an excellent piece of work in organizing and making clear the theories previously formulated concerning the loci of brain damage and the resultant speech disturbances. Some authorities will disagree, of course, with the leanings toward the "localization theory."

To the great number of speech therapists who see relatively few aphasics, but whose combined efforts probably account for most of the speech therapy done with aphasics, and who have sought in vain for a real battery of specific techniques, this book should prove to be invaluable.

WILLIAM L. SHEA

*University of Miami*

TWENTY-ONE YEARS WITH CHILDREN'S THEATRE. By Charlotte Chorpenning. Cloverlot, Anchorage, Kentucky: The Children's Theatre Press, 1954; pp. xi + 112. \$3.50.

In order to write and produce effective plays for children one must have a definite purpose. Charlotte Chorpenning in her book, *Twenty-One Years With Children's Theatre*, states: "Our aim was to give the children in our audience useful experience through their identification." Upon reading the book one can see that she follows this purpose faithfully in her writing, producing, and teaching.

Throughout her experience at the Goodman Children's Theatre in Chicago, Mrs. Chorpenning observed and listened to the children in the audiences, and thus learned from them what would make a play for children a success. The first part of her book, "How the Children Taught Me," shows through story and example how and what Mrs. Chorpenning learned from the children. The last two divisions, "How I Used What the Children Taught Me" and "My Class in Writing for Children's Theatre," tell how she applied what she learned in her own work and how she taught others to apply it. An extremely helpful check-list is provided for those who wish to write plays for children.

Mrs. Chorpenning's book not only provides a useful discussion of writing and producing plays for children, but also a delightfully entertaining picture of her own rich and varied experiences at the Goodman Children's Theatre. The suggestions and ideas are not theory; they are methods she herself has tried to perfect.

Written by one of the first authorities in the field, *Twenty-One Years With Children's Theatre* is a valuable book. Everyone interested in children's theatre should read it carefully.

BARBARA E. DODSON

University of Florida

MINIATURE PLAYS. Volume I. By Madge Miller. Cloverlot, Anchorage, Kentucky: The Children's Theatre Press, 1954; pp. i + 150. \$1.50.

Madge Miller presents in Volume I of her *Miniature Plays*, four plays for children adapted from well-known stories and books. These plays were written for the Pittsburgh Miniature Theatre, whose director, Miss Margo Frye, believes that there is a special need for the "miniature" play because it lasts no more than an hour, and thus can be trouped to schools and fitted into an assembly program. In view of the success of Mrs. Miller's miniature plays, Miss Frye has proved her contention.

Of necessity then, the four plays, *Pinocchio*, *Snow White and Rose Red*, *Robinson Crusoe*, and *Puss in Boots*, are shortened versions of the stories; however, each follows the plot carefully and logically. One method employed by Mrs. Miller in condensing the plays is the use of short transition scenes to be played before the curtain during a scene change. This keeps the story moving forward and the audience interested.

Mrs. Miller has also made the producing of these miniature plays a rela-

tively simple task by providing a complete list of properties and sound effects, as well as clear directions for any unusual effects called for.

In sum, *Miniature Plays* provides four well-written plays that should be a challenge as well as fun to any director of plays for children.

BARBARA E. DODSON

*University of Florida*

FREEDOM AND LOYALTY IN OUR COLLEGES. Edited by Robert E. Summers, Jr. The Reference Shelf, Volume 26, Number 2. New York: The H. W. Wilson Company, 1954; pp. 214. \$1.75.

At a time when freedom of expression in the classroom may be sacrificed through a fear as powerful as outright suppression, this Reference Shelf volume contributes a timely discussion that should be read by every person who teaches in an American college or university.

The editor has wisely chosen those articles most pertinent to the college teacher—articles touching upon the historical background of loyalty investigations, from colonial days, down through the dismissal of the University of North Carolina's Professor Hedrick (who supported a subversive organization—the Republican Party), and to the present Jenner, Velde, and McCarthy investigations.

In general, this volume is a collection of pro and con articles on the meaning of academic freedom and the use of the Fifth Amendment. Although academic freedom is not defined as such, the many writers give different opinions and let the reader define the term for himself.

Of the more than seventy articles which comprise the book, the following are representative: William F. Buckley, "In Defense of Criticism"; Norman Thomas, "A Liberal's Defense of School Probes"; J. B. Matthews, "Extent of Communist Infiltration"; Alan Barth, "Dangers of 'Welcoming' Investigations"; James P. Baxter, "The First Battle: The University of California Oath"; Robert M. MacIver, "Academic Freedom Defined"; and Howard Mumford Jones, "The Closed-Mind Doctrine."

These articles are listed under eight sections, titled: "Communism and National Security"; "Indictments Against the Schools"; "Federal Investigation of Education"; "The States and Subversion"; "The Loyalty Oath Battle"; "The Fifth Amendment Controversy"; "The Broader Issue—Academic Freedom"; and, "Time for Decision."

Although the reader may find the repetition of supporting material from article to article somewhat distracting, it is this reviewer's opinion that *Freedom and Loyalty in Our Colleges* contributes significantly to a clearer understanding of one of the most pressing problems confronting higher education today.

E. THOMAS STARCHER

*University of Maryland*



# NEWS AND NOTES



FRANKLIN R. SHIRLEY

## THEATRE

*Crown of Shadows*, by the noted Mexican author, Rodolfo Usigli, will have its first American performance early in December as part of a Latin American festival sponsored by the School of Fine Arts at Texas Christian University. The play deals with Empress Carlotta, relating in flashbacks the tragic story of herself and Maximilian. *Crown of Shadows* has been staged with great success in Mexico and Belgium. William F. Stirling made the English translation of the play.

Mr. John Gassner lectured at Louisiana State University on June 15, as a special feature of the Summer Festival of Arts.

Five plays were produced at the University of Texas by the Department of Drama during its 1954 six-weeks summer stock season. James Moll directed *Life With Father*. Francis Hodge staged a bill of one act plays, including E. C. Conkle's *Sparkin*, *The Red Peppers* by Coward, and Fry's *A Phoenix Too Frequent*. Shaw's *Misalliance* was directed by A. E. Johnson. Joseph E. Johnston designed the sets and supervised technical direction. Charles Baker was the costumer.

Delwin Dusenbury and John Van Meter of the theatre staff at the University of Florida appeared on the American Educational Theatre Association Conference program in East Lansing, Michigan, August 29-31. Dr. Dusenbury served as one of the critics of the conference and Mr. Van Meter took part in a symposium on summer theatres.

Louisiana State University held a workshop in drama and interpretation for high school teachers and students on October 23.

The Virginia Players of the University of Virginia presented four productions during the past summer season: *Happy Time*, *My Three Angels*, *Ring Round the Moon*, and *Bell, Book, and Candle*. Roger Boyle is director of the Virginia Players.

The Wake Forest College Theatre presented *The Tempest* as part of the annual Magnolia Festival during the first week of May. The production was unique in that Ariel was portrayed by a chorus of nine students. The college theatre plans to experiment further in the fusion of choral reading and acting.

The air-conditioned recreation room of the newest dormitory at the University of Florida provided the setting for the Florida Players' theatre-in-the-round presentation of *Claudia* last summer. Directed by Barbara E. Dodson, settings were by Lee Paul, technical director. The play not only offered summer entertainment, but through an audience reaction questionnaire will furnish information for a graduate thesis project.

The Florida Players' summer program opened with an all-staff presentation of *The Moon Is Blue*. Barbara E. Dodson and Robert Crist, instructors in the Department of Speech, appeared in the leading roles, with Delwin Dusenbury doubling as director and the "man upstairs." William E. Ogden, graduate assistant, completed the cast.

Artemisia B. Bryan and Landon A. Colquitt of the Texas Christian University faculty have prepared a new English version of *The Barber of Seville* to be presented as part of the annual Fine Arts Festival at Texas Christian University.

Bob Jones University at Greenville, South Carolina, recently acquired from the Center Theatre in New York a new stage lift and other equipment. The acquisition of this equipment makes the Bob Jones stage the largest screw-lift revolving stage in America.

*Play Schedules.* Texas Christian University: *Ladies in Retirement*, *Crown of Shadows*, *Barber of Seville*, *Ah Wilderness*. Directors: W. R. Volbach, S. Walker James, and William Garber. Louisiana State University: *Beggar on Horseback*, *Macbeth*, *The Crucible*, and *The Skin of Our Teeth*. Wake Forest College: *Death of a Salesman*. Director: Clyde McElroy. University of Texas: *Morning's at Seven*, *The Trojan Women*, *Peter Pan*, *Our Town*. Directors: Francis Hodge, James Moll, Mouzon Law, and Loren Winship. University of Florida: *My Three Angels*, *Death of a Salesman*. Howard College: *Lady Windemere's Fan*, *Family Portrait*, *The Imaginary Invalid*, and *The Hasty Heart*.

#### APPOINTMENTS AND PROMOTIONS

Two new staff members joined the Speech Arts Division of Mississippi Southern College. John Mader, B.A., Western Michigan College, M.A., Florida State University, and formerly at Alabama College, joined the staff of the speech and hearing clinic. Thomas R. Long, B.F.A., M.F.A., University of Oklahoma, became the technical director of the Southern Players in the absence of Mr. Philip Macomber who is on leave.

Promotions in speech and dramatics at the University of Texas include Loren Winship and Jesse Villarreal, from associate to full professor; and Howard W. Townsend, from assistant to associate professor. Dr. Winship is the head of the drama division, Dr. Villarreal directs the speech clinic, and Dr. Townsend is in charge of the university's speakers' bureau.

James Costy of the University of Denver has been appointed head of the radio-television division of the Department of Speech at Texas Christian University.

Jeanette Roy has been appointed to the position of speech therapist in the Lake Charles, Louisiana, school system. Miss Roy has been doing graduate work in speech correction at Louisiana State University.

Mrs. Louise Brooks, who completed her M.A. in June at Louisiana State University, has become a member of the staff at Louisiana Polytechnic Institute to develop a speech correction program.

Charles Lee Hutton has joined the faculty of Louisiana State University to direct the work in audiology in the speech clinic. Dr. Hutton is a graduate of the University of Illinois.

The director of the newly established cerebral palsy program at Monroe, Louisiana, is John Miller, recently a graduate student at Louisiana State University.

Miss Emogene Emory, women's debate coach at the University of Texas, is on leave for the year to serve as visiting professor at Hardin-Simmons College, Abilene, Texas.

Johnny Johnson has been added to the staff of Howard College's Department of Speech and Dramatic Arts. Mr. Johnson, who is director of television station WABT in Birmingham, will teach radio and television courses and assist with the technical phase of dramatic productions.

Owen M. Peterson, who received his doctor's degree from the State University of Iowa, has recently been added to the speech faculty at Louisiana State University.

Carol Oldham, formerly a member of the Wake Forest College staff, has become director of speech activities in the San Bernardino, California, high school.

Robert C. Jeffrey has been added to the speech staff at the University of Virginia as assistant professor of speech and director of forensics. Mr. Jeffrey has taught at Cornell College and at the State University of Iowa, where he is completing work for his doctor's degree.

Lenore Evans, M.A., Louisiana State University, 1954, has been added to the faculty of the Chicago undergraduate division of the University of Illinois. Miss Evans acted as assistant director of debate at Louisiana State University last year.

Betty Jane Glasscock, who recently completed her M.A. at Louisiana State University, will teach at St. Johns Episcopal Junior College at Vicksburg, Mississippi.

Mary McCaslin of Europa, Mississippi, has been given a special undergraduate assistantship in speech correction at Mississippi Southern College.

The Kay Electric Company of Pine Brook, New Jersey, manufacturers of testing equipment for industrial and laboratory use, recently announced the appointment of Dr. Paul Oncley as audio-development engineer. Dr. Oncley, who was affiliated with the Division of Physical War Research at Duke University during World War II, will devote his time to the development and expansion of the company's line of acoustic measuring instruments.

Mildred LaHaye is the newly appointed speech therapist in the school system at Lafayette, Louisiana. She has recently completed her M.A. degree at Louisiana State University.

Mr. Clarence Denton, graduate student at Louisiana State University, has accepted an appointment to teach at the University of Nebraska.

William Demougrat has been appointed assistant professor of speech at North Texas State College, where he will serve as director of forensics. Mr. Demougrat has been teaching and coaching debate at Princeton University for the past three years.

Joan Merritt of Miami, Florida, has become a student assistant in speech at Wake Forest College.

#### PERSONALS

Jeanne Miles, who received her master's degree from the University of Florida in August, is now teaching courses in voice training and public speaking at Vassar College.

Willie Ann Holmgren received her M.A. in radio from the University of Florida at the August commencement.

The following students from Wake Forest College worked with various North Carolina outdoor theatre productions during the summer: Bob Swain, with *The Lost Colony*, at Manteo; Glen Holt, with *Unto These Hills*, at Cherokee; and Parker Wilson, with *Horn in the West*, at Boone.

Frank Lewis, director of radio at Mississippi Southern College, attended the special workshop in television offered by Michigan State College in August.

Bob Swain, a recent graduate of Wake Forest College with a major in speech, has enrolled for graduate study in theatre at Baylor University where he will also serve as a graduate assistant.

Waldo W. Braden, professor of speech at Louisiana State University, gave a lecture at the University of Missouri on June 18.

Rex Wier, director of forensics at North Texas State College, has been granted a year's leave of absence to complete his Ph.D. degree at the University of Denver.

During the past summer E. P. Conkle, professor of drama and resident playwright at the University of Texas, was guest professor at the School of Fine Arts, Banff, Alberta, where he taught playwriting.

Francine Merritt, assistant professor of speech at Louisiana State University, received a University grant for a research project in New York City during the month of September.

George M. Stokes received his Ph.D. degree from Northwestern University last June. Dr. Stokes is in charge of the work in radio and television in the Department of Speech and Radio at Baylor University.

Chloe Armstrong of Baylor University was guest lecturer in oral interpretation at Mississippi Southern College, July 14-16. Miss Armstrong delivered a series of ten lectures and readings to English, education, library science, and speech classes.

Hardy Perritt received the Ph.D. degree from the University of Florida in June, with a dissertation on "Robert Barnwell Rhett: South Carolina Secession Spokesman." He is at present interim assistant professor of speech on the Florida staff.

Giles W. Gray, professor of speech at Louisiana State University, was visiting lecturer at Southwest Texas State Teachers College at San Marcos, July 19-23.

Lear Ashmore, speech correctionist at North Texas State College, spent the summer months at Northwestern University working on her doctor's degree.

#### DEPARTMENTS

The University of Virginia and Mary Washington College, women's college of the University, have announced a cooperative program in speech correction and audiology which will make it possible for undergraduates at Mary Washington to spend their fourth year in residence at the University of Virginia to complete a major program in speech correction and audiology. In addition to the academic program, students will do supervised therapy in the Speech and Hearing Center which maintains a full-time staff of three persons under the direction of James M. Mullendore.

Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Virginia, is setting up an audio-visual center which will occupy most of the ground floor of one of its buildings. The center will consist of three studios, three listening rooms, and a control room.

The Graduate School of Education at the University of Virginia instituted during the 1954 summer session, companion courses in professional speaking and professional writing. Designed primarily for public school administrators, the professional speaking course was taught by J. Jeffery Auer, chairman of the Department of Speech and Drama, and the professional writing course by Hollis A. Moore, junior associate editor of *The Nations Schools*.

The twentieth annual Conference on Speech Education was held at Louisiana State University, June 9-18. Eight lectures were delivered by Loren D. Reid, professor of speech at the University of Missouri.

A series of five reading hours during the summer session at Louisiana State University featured the following readers: C. M. Wise, Clarence Denton, Beverly Bateman, Avis Bowlin, and Alma Belle Womack. Francine Merritt was director of the program.

The Department of Radio, Television, and Motion Pictures at the University of North Carolina is now offering the degree of Master of Arts in Communications.

On July 6, the national offices of the Speech Association of America were opened at Louisiana State University. The offices are located in the Field House, the administration office building in the heart of the campus. Members who are passing through Baton Rouge are invited to visit the national offices.

The Audio-Visual Aids Service of San Jose State College, San Jose, California, invites schools throughout the nation to send on permanent loan, tape recordings of readings from literature. It is requested that whenever possible recordings be made on a full-track, half-hour tape, at 7.5 inches per second, and that the title of the selection as well as the names of the author, reader, and institution, and the date of recording be announced on the tape and written on the cover of the box as well. Periodically, *The Speech Teacher* will publish a list of available tapes. Anyone is welcome to send for any tape on the list. It is merely necessary to mail a blank tape, enclosing a request for the tape wanted and stamps sufficient for return postage. The copy will be made and sent immediately. The following tapes are now available: "Gravediggers Scene" (*Hamlet*), read by

Lee Emerson Bassett, Professor Emeritus, Stanford University; "Enoch Arden" (Tennyson), read by Leonard Ecker, graduate student, Michigan State College; program presented at Western Speech Association Convention, 1953 (Jeffers, Sandburg, Cummings, and others), read by Janet Bolton, speech faculty, Occidental College; lecture recital (Housman), read by Garff Wilson, speech faculty, University of California, Berkeley; selected poems of John Neihardt, read by Mr. Neihardt, University of Missouri; selected readings from the Bible, Maxwell Anderson, Stephen Vincent Benet, and J. W. Johnson, read by Joyce Osborne, San Jose State College. There is also available a tape recording of Mr. Bassett's address "From Doghouse to Doctorate," delivered at the 1949 meeting of the Western Speech Association. In this address Mr. Bassett impersonates the nineteenth-century elocutionists.

The University of Florida inaugurated this summer an English Language Institute for foreign students. A nine-weeks session, running from July 5 to September 3, was attended by eighteen students from eleven countries. The purpose of the Institute is to provide foreign students intensive training in reading, writing, speaking, and understanding English before they enter American colleges. The Institute was established by the Florida Board of Control on a self-supporting basis for three summers, after which it will be decided whether or not such a program should become a part of the regular University program. The staff of the first Institute consisted of Hardy Perritt, director; Mrs. Jayne Crane Harder, instructor; Thomas Abbott, graduate assistant; and Barbara Gann, student assistant.

#### FORENSICS

The debate staff at the University of Florida for the 1954-55 season consists of Douglas Ehninger and Hardy Perritt, co-directors, Kevin Kearney from the University of Vermont and James M. Ladd from Phillips University in Oklahoma as graduate assistants, and Larry Sands, undergraduate assistant.

The Howard College debate team entertained the Oxford University team on November 19.

Virgil H. Moorefield, Jr., who was graduated from Wake Forest College in 1953, recently returned to this country from a debating tour of British universities sponsored by the Institute of International Education, the Speech Association of America, and the English Speaking Union of London. Moorefield and Richard King of Northwestern University spoke at twenty-six formal engagements in England, Scotland, and Wales. Their topics ranged from the outlawing of the Communist Party to "regretting the modern woman." During his four years at Wake Forest, Moorefield was active in Southern Speech Association Tournaments and other forensic activities. He is currently a graduate student at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, North Carolina.

